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# THE GREEK CLASSICS

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VOLUME FOUR

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Philosophy



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## INTRODUCTION

### THE ABIDING POWER OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY

BY PAUL SHOREY, PH.D., LL.D.,

Professor of Greek in the University of Chicago



GREEK philosophy is for the twentieth century man the most vital, as it is the most original, portion of our inheritance of classical literature. Until the certainties of science shall have destroyed all interest in the guesses of the pre-scientific ages it will continue to be studied not only for its intrinsic value, but as the source and inspiration of all later European speculative thought. Mill hardly exaggerates when he says in substance that, though philosophy is abundantly amenable to general causes, without Socrates and Plato there would have been no philosophy. The Greek conception of the word includes much more than the metaphysics of the schools. It may be variously expressed by Herbert Spencer's definition of philosophy as "completely unified knowledge," by the orator and teacher Isocrates' use of it as a synonym for the higher culture, by Cicero's apostrophe to it as the guide of right living, by Plato's idealization of it as not the conceit but the love and amorous pursuit of wisdom—the perpetual questing of the soul which Lessing preferred to the fancied security of dogmatic certainty.

The remains of the literature covered by this comprehensive term group themselves roughly under these heads: The fragments of the pre-Socratics; the voluminous extant writings of Plato and Aristotle; the fragments of the lost works of the post-Aristotelian schools—Stoic, Epicurean and Sceptic; the later Greek and Roman monuments of this post Aristotelian ethical and religious philosophy—such things that is as Lucretius' poem *De Rerum Natura*, the philosophical



dialogue-treatises of Cicero, the essays and philosophical letters of Seneca, the so-called *Moralia* of Plutarch, the Dissertations of Epictetus, the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius; and lastly the extensive literature of Neoplatonism—Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus and the rest.

The appeal and distinctive values of these different branches of Greek philosophy are very various. But no thoughtful reader can fail to find in some one of them if properly presented a more than merely curious or erudite interest.

The pregnant sayings of the philosophers and philosophic poets who preceded Socrates possess, quite apart from any attempts at systematic and critical interpretation, incomparable suggestiveness regarded merely as isolated texts. They are the first efforts of the European mind to explain the world in other than religious and mythical terms, but still retain something of the poetical and apocalyptic quality of myth and religion, stimulating with diverse appeal the scientific, the mystic, the philosophic imagination. "Do you know," writes D'Annunzio, "the maxim of the great Heraclitus, 'The name of the bow is bios (life), but its work is death'? This is a maxim that excites our spirit even before communicating to it its prime meaning." Hegel tells us that there is no saying of Heraclitus that he has not incorporated in his *Logic*. Critical historians of philosophy are tempted to read into Empedocles the "survival of the fittest," or the chemical law of Definite Proportions. And Emerson sums it all up in the words: "This band of grandees . . . Heraclitus, Empedocles . . . and the rest, have somewhat so vast in their logic, so primary in their thinking, that it seems antecedent to all the ordinary distinctions of literature, and to be at once poetry and music . . . and astronomy and mathematics. *I am present at the sowing of the seed of the world.*" Despite their ignorance of particulars now familiar to every school-boy, these writers by intuition of far-reaching analogy leap at once to some of the largest generalizations of modern science—the reign of law, the indestructibility of matter, the universality of motion, the atomic theory, the evolution of life from lower forms, the infinity of the universe. What Jowett describes as the weakness of the early Greek

thinker is a source of his strength. "He brings into juxtaposition things which to us appear wide as the poles asunder, because he finds nothing between them." But until evolution broke down artificial distinctions and taught us that "the score of God's creation is not crossed with bars," the modern was apt to see so much between that he failed to perceive what Bacon called the identical footprints of nature in different material.

Apart from this mere suggestiveness, these writers present two other more definite interests. In the first place from Thales to Empedocles and Democritus they worked out that conception of a rational and mechanical explanation of the world which afterwards found consummate expression in the world's one great poem of science the *De Rerum Natura* of the Roman Epicurean Lucretius. For this they have been exalted even above Plato and Aristotle by like-minded thinkers from Bacon and his Italian predecessors to Lange, Tyndall and Huxley. Secondly, they first illustrate what Aristotle exhibits at a later stage the genesis of science. The consummation of science may be verified detail, and special law. But it begins as an all-embracing imaginative philosophy of nature. From this parent stock the separate sciences detach themselves as fast as specialization enables them to live an independent life. This can hardly be understood without some study of Greek philosophy.

Since the publication of Jowett's translation Plato has become an English author influencing the life and thought of our time as directly and practically as a Mill, a Carlyle, or a Ruskin. We need not take account of dissentients like Bentham, who thought the Socratic dialectic mere foolishness, or Herbert Spencer, who meeting with something that displeased him, refused to read further. Nearly all educated men now read Plato for stimulus and suggestion, if not as disciples, and a university library requires many duplicate copies of his works for the departments of English, Sociology and Philosophy. This is merely one of those periodic revivals of Platonism which Emerson describes in his dithyrambic but essentially sound essay and which will always recur after intervals of neglect, because the dialogues, apart from their

dramatic interest and literary charm, make a manifold appeal to numerous abiding instincts and aptitudes of the human mind through dialectic, metaphysics, mysticism, and æsthetic and ethical enthusiasm.

No such revival is to be expected for Aristotle whose absolute reign, either as the mediæval master of all knowledge, or the seventeenth century legislator of Parnassus, is ended. But the historian of science when he arrives will need to re-study the scientific treatises for which helps are multiplying; the student of philosophy must always recur to the logic and Metaphysics; the Ethics and Politics will continue to hold their place on the reference shelf of every university course in sociology or ethics; and the Poetics and Rhetoric will still be indispensable text-books for students of literature and the history of literary criticism. The new and reliable translations of Aristotle, now being published under the provisions of Jowett's will, by a committee of English scholars, will bring him many additional readers; but will not, like the Plato, become a constituent part of English literature.

The collection and interpretation of the fragments of the older Stoics and Epicureans interest mainly the professional scholar. But in later Greco-Roman times the broader eclectic, Platonizing philosophy of those post-Aristotelian schools produced works which still hold their place in world literature and lists of the best hundred books. Cicero's philosophical writings are, from the point of view of the specialist, plausible but superficial paraphrases of lost Greek treatises. But their urbane breadth and smooth Latinity have exercised an influence on modern culture that can hardly be overestimated, and of which the history is still to be written. Plutarch's moral essays have furnished ideas and illustrations to many generations of moralists from Montaigne to Emerson and still make excellent reading. The Dissertations of Epictetus are to-day a pillow book for many devout souls, and the Meditations of the philosophic Emperor Marcus Aurelius have been celebrated by latitudinarian theologians as the expression of the "absolute religion," which affirms no dogma but merely depicts a high moral consciousness face to face with an inscrutable world.

Neoplatonism would demand a chapter for itself. The works of Plotinus, Iamblichus, and Proclus will never recover the vogue which they obtained in the Italian Renaissance. But, as Emerson's enthusiasm for them shows, they possess for kindred spirits a more than technical and historical interest and will continue to find fit audience, though few, even in the age of the telephone and the motor car. The peculiar mixture in their writings of lofty spirituality, mystical enthusiasm and austere dialectic combined with allegorical interpretation of a sacred (Platonic) text and seeming concessions to occultism appeals to permanent instincts of human nature. The Neoplatonist is a type that is perpetually renewed from Alexandria to Florence, Oxford, Concord, Jacksonville and Osceola. From the philologist's point of view their interpretation of the historic Plato is uncritical. But in their enthusiasm for the master, their high spirituality, the sincerity of their devotion to an ideal, and their consistent scorn for the standards and ambitions of a materialistic and commercial time, they are an impressive illustration of the abiding power of Greek philosophy even in its latest, and as hard-headed rationalists judge, its most degenerate stage.





# THE FABLES OF ÆSOP

*TRANSLATED FROM THE METRICAL VERSION*

OF

BABRIUS

BY THE

REV. GEORGE FYLER TOWNSEND, M.A.

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*WITH AN INTRODUCTION ON*

ÆSOP, THE FABULIST



## INTRODUCTION

### ÆSOP, THE FABULIST

THAT wisdom came from the East was recognized by the Greeks. One of its earliest forms was the Fable, intended to inculcate practical morality. Although the Battle of the Frogs and Mice, ascribed to Homer, and the fable of The Hawk and The Nightingale found in the Works and Days of Hesiod, are early examples of the animal epic and apologue, these forms of moral imaginative literature were referred by the Greeks to an Oriental source. Æsop, a Phrygian slave of Samos, who lived in the seventh century before Christ, was considered the Father of the Fable. Aristophanes and Plato both speak of Æsopic jokes as a distinct kind of fun, and Aristotle tells how, having been freed by his Samian master, Æsop was patronized for his wisdom by Cræsus, who sent him on an embassy to the oracle of Apollo at Delphi, where he was murdered by the priests, who escaped punishment at the hands of the indignant god only by extreme expiation of the crime. It was said that Æsop came to life again, owing to his piety, a legend probably arising from another fabulist being complimented by the phrase "Æsop re-born." Later Greek art represented Æsop as a hideous deformed creature, perhaps to indicate his affinity with animals, and mediæval art continued the tradition.

First by word of mouth, and then by writing, his apologues spread over the entire Greek world. Socrates, during his imprisonment, spent his last days in turning them into verse. The first collection of the fables was made by DEMETRIUS OF PHALERUM about B.C. 300. Modern prose versions of Æsop's Fables are based on the metrical version by BABRIUS, who wrote in the beginning of the first century before Christ, and whose work was lost to the world until 1842, when 123 of his fables were discovered in the monastery at Mount Athos by a Greek, Minoides Minas. In 857 Minas brought to light ninety-five more fables, whose genuineness was questioned by a number of scholars.



PHÆDRUS, a Greek slave, who was brought from Macedonia to Rome, introduced fable-writing into Latin literature.

Since Æsop's Fables is a book found in every household, only the most famous of them are here presented. They were translated literally from the original Greek by the Rev. George Fyler Townsend, M.A.

## THE FABLES OF ÆSOP

### THE LION AND THE MOUSE

A LION was awakened from sleep by a Mouse running over his face. Rising up in anger, he caught him and was about to kill him, when the Mouse piteously entreated, saying: "If you would only spare my life, I would be sure to repay your kindness." The Lion laughed and let him go. It happened shortly after this that the Lion was caught by some hunters, who bound him by strong ropes to the ground. The Mouse, recognizing his roar, came up, and gnawed the rope with his teeth, and setting him free, exclaimed: "You ridiculed the idea of my ever being able to help you, not expecting to receive from me any repayment of your favour; but now you know that it is possible for even a Mouse to confer benefits on a Lion."

### THE FATHER AND HIS SON

A FATHER had a family of sons who were perpetually quarrelling among themselves. When he failed to heal their disputes by his exhortations, he determined to give them a practical illustration of the evils of disunion; and for this purpose he one day told them to bring him a bundle of sticks. When they had done so, he placed the faggot into the hands of each of them in succession, and ordered them to break it in pieces. They each tried with all their strength, and were not able to do it. He next enclosed the faggot, and took the sticks separately, one by one, and again put them into their hands, on which they broke them easily. He then addressed them in these words: "My sons, if you are of one mind, and unite to assist each other, you will be as this faggot, uninjured by all the attempts of your enemies; but if you are divided among yourselves, you will be broken as easily as these sticks."

### THE WOLF AND THE LAMB

A WOLF meeting with a Lamb astray from the fold, resolved not to lay violent hands on him, but to find some plea,

which should justify to the Lamb himself his right to eat him. He thus addressed him: "Sirrah, last year you grossly insulted me." "Indeed," bleated the Lamb in a mournful tone of voice, "I was not then born." Then said the Wolf, "You feed in my pasture." "No, good sir," replied the Lamb, "I have not yet tasted grass." Again said the Wolf, "You drink of my well." "No," exclaimed the Lamb, "I never yet drank water, for as yet my mother's milk is both food and drink to me." On which the Wolf seized him, and ate him up, saying, "Well! I won't remain supperless, even though they refute every one of my imputations."

The tyrant will always find a pretext for his tyranny.

### THE BAT AND THE WEASELS

A BAT falling upon the ground was caught by a Weasel, of whom he earnestly sought his life. The Weasel refused, saying, that he was by nature the enemy of all birds. The Bat assured him that he was not a bird, but a mouse, and thus saved his life. Shortly afterwards the Bat again fell on the ground, and was caught by another Weasel, whom he likewise entreated not to eat him. The Weasel said that he had a special hostility to mice. The Bat assured him that he was not a mouse, but a bat; and thus a second time escaped.

It is wise to turn circumstances to good account.

### THE ASS AND THE GRASSHOPPER

AN Ass having heard some Grasshoppers chirping, was highly enchanted; and, desiring to possess the same charms of melody, demanded what sort of food they lived on, to give them such beautiful voices. They replied, "The dew." The Ass resolved that he would only live upon dew, and in a short time died of hunger.

### THE WOLF AND THE CRANE

A WOLF, having a bone stuck in his throat, hired a Crane, for a large sum, to put her head into his throat and draw out the

bone. When the Crane had extracted the bone, and demanded the promised payment, the Wolf, grinning and grinding his teeth, exclaimed: "Why, you have surely already a sufficient recompense, in having been permitted to draw out your head in safety from the mouth and jaws of a wolf."

In serving the wicked, expect no reward, and be thankful if you escape injury for your pains.

### THE CHARCOAL-BURNER AND THE FULLER

A CHARCOAL-BURNER carried on his trade in his own house. One day he met a friend, a Fuller, and entreated him to come and live with him, saying, that they should be far better neighbours, and that their housekeeping expenses would be lessened. The Fuller replied, "The arrangement is impossible as far as I am concerned, for whatever I should whiten, you would immediately blacken again with your charcoal."

Like will draw like.

### THE ANTS AND THE GRASSHOPPER

THE ANTS were employing a fine winter's day in drying grain collected in the summer time. A Grasshopper, perishing with famine, passed by and earnestly begged for a little food. The Ants inquired of him, "Why did you not treasure up food during the summer?" He replied, "I had not leisure enough. I passed the days in singing." They then said in derision: "If you were foolish enough to sing all the summer, you must dance supperless to bed in the winter."

### THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE

A HARE one day ridiculed the short feet and slow pace of the Tortoise. The latter, laughing, said: "Though you be swift as the wind, I will beat you in a race." The Hare, deeming her assertion to be simply impossible, assented to the proposal; and they agreed that the Fox should choose the course, and fix the goal. On the day appointed for the race they started together. The Tortoise never for a moment stopped,



but went on with a slow but steady pace straight to the end of the course. The Hare, trusting to his native swiftness, cared little about the race, and lying down by the wayside, fell fast asleep. At last waking up, and moving as fast as he could, he saw the Tortoise had reached the goal, and was comfortably dozing after her fatigue.

### HERCULES AND THE WAGGONER

A CARTER was driving a waggon along a country lane, when the wheels sank down deep into a rut. The rustic driver, stupefied and aghast, stood looking at the waggon, and did nothing but utter loud cries to Hercules to come and help him. Hercules, it is said, appeared, and thus addressed him:—"Put your shoulder to the wheels, my man. Goad on your bullocks, and never more pray to me for help, until you have done your best to help yourself, or depend upon it you will henceforth pray in vain."

Self-help is the best help.

### THE DOG AND THE SHADOW

A DOG, crossing a bridge over a stream with a piece of flesh in his mouth, saw his own shadow in the water, and took it for that of another Dog, with a piece of meat double his own in size. He therefore let go his own, and fiercely attacked the other Dog, to get his larger piece from him. He thus lost both: that which he grasped at in the water, because it was a shadow; and his own, because the stream swept it away.

### THE FARMER AND THE SNAKE.

A FARMER found in the winter time a Snake stiff and frozen with cold. He had compassion on it, and taking it up placed it in his bosom. The Snake on being thawed by the warmth quickly revived, when, resuming its natural instincts, he bit his benefactor, inflicting on him a mortal wound. The Farmer said with his latest breath, "I am rightly served for pitying a scoundrel!"

The greatest benefits will not bind the ungrateful.

## THE FARMER AND THE STORK

A FARMER placed nets on his newly-sown plough lands, and caught a quantity of Cranes, which came to pick up his seed. With them he trapped a Stork also. The Stork having his leg fractured by the net, earnestly besought the Farmer to spare his life. "Pray, save me, Master," he said, "and let me go free this once. My broken limb should excite your pity. Besides, I am no Crane, I am a Stork, a bird of excellent character; and see how I love and slave for my father and mother. Look too, at my feathers, they are not the least like to those of a Crane." The Farmer laughed aloud, and said, "It may be all as you say; I only know this, I have taken you with these robbers, the Cranes, and you must die in their company."

Birds of a feather flock together.

## THE MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR

A MOUNTAIN was once greatly agitated. Loud groans and noises were heard; and crowds of people came from all parts to see what was the matter. While they were assembled in anxious expectation of some terrible calamity, out came a Mouse.

Don't make much ado about nothing.

## THE MAN AND THE LION

A MAN and a Lion travelled together through the forest. They soon began to boast of their respective superiority to each other in strength and prowess. As they were disputing, they passed a statue, carved in stone, which represented "a Lion strangled by a Man." The traveller pointed to it and said: "See there! How strong we are, and how we prevail over even the king of beasts." The Lion replied: "This statue was made by one of you men. If we Lions knew how to erect statues, you would see the Man placed under the paw of the Lion."

One story is good, till another is told.

## THE LIONESS

A CONTROVERSY prevailed among the beasts of the field, as to which of the animals deserved the most credit for producing the greatest number of whelps at a birth. They rushed clamorously into the presence of the Lioness, and demanded of her the settlement of the dispute. "And you," they said, "how many sons have you at a birth?" The Lioness laughed at them, and said: "Why! I have only one; but that one is altogether a thorough-bred Lion."

The value is in the worth, not in the number.

## THE OXEN AND THE AXLE-TREES

A HEAVY wagon was being dragged along a country lane by a team of oxen. The axle-trees groaned and creaked terribly: when the oxen turning round, thus addressed the wheels. "Hullo there! why do you make so much noise? We bear all the labour, and we, not you, ought to cry out."

Those who suffer most cry out the least.

## THE DOG IN THE MANGER

A DOG lay in a manger, and by his growling and snapping prevented the oxen from eating the hay which had been placed for them. "What a selfish Dog!" said one of them to his companions; "He cannot eat the hay himself, and yet refuses to allow those to eat who can."

## THE SICK LION

A LION being unable from old age and infirmities to provide himself with food by force, resolved to do so by artifice. He betook himself to his den, and lying down there, pretended to be sick, taking care that his sickness should be publicly known. The beasts expressed their sorrow, and came one by one to his den to visit him, when the Lion devoured them. After many of the beasts had thus disappeared, the Fox discovered the trick, and presenting himself to the Lion, stood on the outside of the cave, at a respectful distance, and asked of

him how he did; to whom he replied, "I am very middling, but why do you stand without? pray enter within to talk with me." The Fox replied, "No, thank you, I notice that there are many prints of feet entering your cave, but I see no trace of any returning."

He is wise who is warned by the misfortunes of others.

### THE BOASTING TRAVELLER.

A MAN who had travelled in foreign lands boasted very much, on returning to his own country, of the many wonderful and heroic things he had done in the different places he had visited. Among other things, he said that when he was at Rhodes he had leapt to such a distance that no man of his day could leap anywhere near him—and as to that, there were in Rhodes many persons who saw him do it, and whom he could call as witnesses. One of the bystanders interrupting him, said: "Now, my good man, if this be all true there is no need of witnesses. Suppose this to be Rhodes; and now for your leap."

### THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

ONCE upon a time a Wolf resolved to disguise his nature by his habit, that so he might get food without stint. Encased in the skin of a sheep, he pastured with the flock, beguiling the shepherd by his artifice. In the evening he was shut up by the shepherd in the fold; the gate was closed, and the entrance made thoroughly secure. The shepherd coming into the fold during the night to provide food for the morrow, caught up the Wolf, instead of a sheep, and killed him with his knife in the fold.

Harm seek, harm find.

### THE FROGS ASKING FOR A KING

THE Frogs, grieved at having no established Ruler, sent ambassadors to Jupiter entreating for a King. He, perceiving their simplicity, cast down a huge log into the lake. The Frogs, terrified at the splash occasioned by its fall, hid themselves in the depths of the pool. But no sooner did they see

that the huge log continued motionless, than they swam again to the top of the water, dismissed their fears, and came so to despise it as to climb up, and to squat upon it. After some time they began to think themselves ill-treated in the appointment of so inert a Ruler, and sent a second deputation to Jupiter to pray that he would set over them another sovereign. He then gave them an Eel to govern them. When the Frogs discovered his easy good nature, they yet a third time sent to Jupiter to beg that he would once more choose for them another King. Jupiter, displeased at their complaints, sent a Heron, who preyed upon the Frogs day by day till there were none left to croak upon the Lake.

### THE SHEPHERD'S BOY AND WOLF

A SHEPHERD-BOY, who watched a flock of sheep near a village, brought out the villagers three or four times by crying out "Wolf! Wolf!" and when his neighbors came to help him, laughed at them for their pains. The Wolf, however, did truly come at last. The Shepherd-boy, now really alarmed, shouted in an agony of terror: "Pray, do come and help me; the Wolf is killing the sheep;" but no one paid any heed to his cries, nor rendered any assistance. The Wolf, having no cause of fear, took it easily, and lacerated or destroyed the whole flock.

There is no believing a liar, even when he speaks the truth.

### THE FOX WHO HAD LOST HIS TAIL

A Fox caught in a trap, escaped with the loss of his "brush." Henceforth feeling his life a burden from the shame and ridicule to which he was exposed, he schemed to bring all the other Foxes into a like condition with himself, that in the common loss he might the better conceal his own deprivation. He assembled a good many Foxes, and publicly advised them to cut off their tails, saying that they would not only look much better without them, but that they would get rid of the weight of the brush, which was a very great inconvenience. One of them interrupting him said, "If you had not yourself lost your tail, my friend, you would not thus counsel us."



## THE MAN AND HIS TWO SWEETHEARTS

A MIDDLE-AGED man, whose hair had begun to turn grey, courted two women at the same time. One of them was young; and the other, well advanced in years. The elder woman, ashamed to be courted by a man younger than herself, made a point, whenever her admirer visited her, to pull out some portion of his black hairs. The younger, on the contrary, not wishing to become the wife of an old man, was equally zealous in removing every grey hair she could find. Thus it came to pass, that between them both he very soon found that he had not a hair left on his head.

Those who seek to please everybody please nobody.

## THE VAIN JACKDAW

JUPITER determined, it is said, to create a sovereign over the birds; and made proclamation that, on a certain day, they should all present themselves before him, when he would himself choose the most beautiful among them to be king. The Jackdaw, knowing his own ugliness, searched through the woods and fields, and collected the feathers which had fallen from the wings of his companions, and stuck them in all parts of his body, hoping thereby to make himself the most beautiful of all. When the appointed day arrived, and the birds had assembled before Jupiter, the Jackdaw also made his appearance in his many-feathered finery. On Jupiter proposing to make him king, on account of the beauty of his plumage, the birds indignantly protested, and each plucking from him his own feathers, the Jackdaw was again nothing but a jackdaw.

## THE WOLVES AND THE SHEEP

"WHY should there always be this internecine and implacable warfare between us?" said the Wolves to the Sheep. "Those evil-disposed Dogs have much to answer for. They always bark whenever we approach you, and attack us before we have done any harm. If you would only dismiss them from your heels, there might soon be treaties of peace and of reconciliation between us." The Sheep, poor silly creatures! were

easily beguiled, and dismissed the Dogs. The Wolves destroyed the unguarded flock at their own pleasure.

### THE KID AND THE WOLF

A KID standing on the roof of a house, out of harm's way, saw a Wolf passing by: and immediately began to taunt and revile him. The Wolf, looking up, said: "Sirrah! I hear thee: yet it is not thou who mockest me, but the roof on which thou art standing."

Time and place often give the advantage to the weak over the strong.

### THE FARMER AND HIS SONS

A FARMER being on the point of death wished to ensure from his sons the same attention to his farm as he had himself given it. He called them to his bedside, and said, "My sons, there is a great treasure hid in one of my vineyards." The sons after his death took their spades and mattocks, and carefully dug over every portion of their land. They found no treasure, but the vines repaid their labour by an extraordinary and superabundant crop.

### THE OX AND THE FROG

AN OX drinking at a pool, trod on a brood of young frogs, and crushed one of them to death. The mother coming up, and missing one of her sons, inquired of his brothers what had become of him. "He is dead, dear mother; for just now a very huge beast with four great feet came to the pool, and crushed him to death with his cloven heel." The Frog, puffing herself out, inquired, "if the beast was as big as that in size." "Cease, mother, to puff yourself out," said her son, "and do not be angry; for you would, I assure you, sooner burst than successfully imitate the hugeness of that monster."

### THE OLD WOMAN AND THE PHYSICIAN

AN old woman having lost the use of her eyes, called in a Physician to heal them, and made this bargain with him

in the presence of witnesses: that if he should cure her blindness, he should receive from her a sum of money; but if her infirmity remained, she should give him nothing. This agreement being entered into, the Physician, time after time, applied his salve to her eyes, and on every visit taking something away, stole by little and little all her property: and when he had got all she had, he healed her, and demanded the promised payment. The old woman, when she recovered her sight and saw none of her goods in her house, would give him nothing. The Physician insisted on his claim, and, as she still refused, summoned her before the Archons. The old woman standing up in the Court thus spoke:—"This man here speaks the truth in what he says; for I did promise to give him a sum of money, if I should recover my sight: but if I continued blind, I was to give him nothing. Now he declares 'that I am healed.' I on the contrary affirm 'that I am still blind;' for when I lost the use of my eyes, I saw in my house various chattels and valuable goods: but now, though he swears I am cured of my blindness, I am not able to see a single thing in it."

### THE TWO POTS

A RIVER carried down in its stream two Pots, one made of earthenware, and the other of brass. The Earthen Pot said to the Brass Pot, "Pray keep at a distance, and do not come near me: for if you touch me ever so slightly, I shall be broken in pieces; and besides, I by no means wish to come near you."

Equals make the best friends.

### THE ÆTHIOP

THE purchaser of a black servant was persuaded that the colour of his skin arose from dirt contracted through the neglect of his former masters. On bringing him home he resorted to every means of cleaning, and subjected him to incessant scrubbings. He caught a severe cold, but he never changed his colour or complexion.

What's bred in the bone will stick to the flesh.

## THE WILD ASS AND THE LION

A WILD Ass and a Lion entered into an alliance that they might capture the beasts of the forest with the greater ease. The Lion agreed to assist the Wild Ass with his strength, while the Wild Ass gave the Lion the benefit of his greater speed. When they had taken as many beasts as their necessities required, the Lion undertook to distribute the prey, and for this purpose divided it into three shares. "I will take the first share," he said, "because I am King: and the second share, as a partner with you in the chase: and the third share (believe me) will be a source of great evil to you, unless you willingly resign it to me, and set off as fast as you can."

Might makes right.

## THE EAGLE AND THE ARROW

AN EAGLE sat on a lofty rock, watching the movements of a Hare, whom he sought to make his prey. An archer who saw him from a place of concealment, took an accurate aim, and wounded him mortally. The Eagle gave one look at the arrow that had entered his heart, and saw in that single glance that its feathers had been furnished by himself. "It is a double grief to me," he exclaimed, "that I should perish by an arrow feathered from my own wings."

A consciousness of misfortunes arising from a man's own misconduct aggravates their bitterness.

## THE HEN AND THE GOLDEN EGGS

A COTTAGER and his wife had a Hen, which laid every day a golden egg. They supposed that it must contain a great lump of gold in its inside, and killed it in order that they might get it, when to their surprise they found that the Hen differed in no respect from their other hens. The foolish pair, thus hoping to become rich all at once, deprived themselves of the gain of which they were day by day assured.

## THE TREES AND THE AXE

A MAN came into a forest, and made a petition to the Trees to provide him a handle for his axe. The Trees consented to his request, and gave him a young ash tree. No sooner had the man fitted from it a new handle to his axe, than he began to use it, and quickly felled with his strokes the noblest giants of the forest. An old oak, lamenting when too late the destruction of his companions, said to a neighbouring cedar, "The first step has lost us all. If we had not given up the rights of the ash, we might yet have retained our own privileges, and have stood for ages."

## THE FOX AND THE GRAPES

A FAMISHED Fox saw some clusters of ripe black grapes hanging from a trellised vine. She resorted to all her tricks to get at them, but wearied herself in vain, for she could not reach them. At last she turned away, beguiling herself of her disappointment and saying: "The Grapes are sour, and not ripe as I thought."

## THE QUACK FROG

A FROG once on a time came forth from his home in the marsh, and made proclamation to all the beasts that he was a learned physician, skilled in the use of drugs, and able to heal all diseases. A Fox asked him, "How can you pretend to prescribe for others, who are unable to heal your own lame gait and wrinkled skin?"

## THE NORTH WIND AND THE SUN

THE North Wind and the Sun disputed which was the most powerful, and agreed that he should be declared the victor, who could first strip a wayfaring man of his clothes. The North Wind first tried his power, and blew with all his might: but the keener became his blasts, the closer the Traveller wrapped his cloak around him; till at last, resigning all hope of victory, he called upon the Sun to see what he could do. The Sun suddenly shone out with all his warmth. The Traveller



no sooner felt his genial rays than he took off one garment after another, and at last, fairly overcome with heat, undressed, and bathed in a stream that lay in his path.

Persuasion is better than Force.

### THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN

AN Ass, having put on the Lion's skin, roamed about in the forest, and amused himself by frightening all the foolish animals he met with in his wanderings. At last meeting a Fox, he tried to frighten him also, but the Fox no sooner heard the sound of his voice, than he exclaimed, "I might possibly have been frightened myself, if I had not heard your bray."

### THE MAN AND THE SATYR

A MAN and a Satyr once poured out libations together in token of a bond of alliance being formed between them. One very cold wintry day, as they talked together, the Man put his fingers to his mouth and blew on them. On the Satyr inquiring the reason of this, he told him that he did it to warm his hands, they were so cold. Later on in the day they sat down to eat, the food prepared being quite scalding. The Man raised one of the dishes a little towards his mouth and blew in it. On the Satyr again inquiring the reason of this, he said that he did it to cool the meat, it was so hot. "I can no longer consider you as a friend," said the Satyr, "a fellow who with the same breath blows hot and cold."

### THE GNAT AND THE BULL

A GNAT settled on the horn of a Bull, and sat there a long time. Just as he was about to fly off, he made a buzzing noise, and inquired of the Bull if he would like him to go. The Bull replied, "I did not know you had come, and I shall not miss you when you go away."

Some men are of more consequence in their own eyes than in the eyes of their neighbours.

## THE VIPER AND THE FILE.

A VIPER entering the workshop of a smith, sought from the tools the means of satisfying his hunger. He more particularly addressed himself to a File, and asked of him the favour of a meal. The File replied, "You must indeed be a simple-minded fellow if you expect to get anything from me, who am accustomed to take from every one, and never to give anything in return."

The covetous are poor givers.

## THE CAT AND VENUS.

A CAT fell in love with a handsome young man, and entreated Venus that she would change her into the form of a woman. Venus consented to her request, and transformed her into a beautiful damsel, so that the youth saw her, and loved her, and took her home as his bride. While they were reclining in their chamber, Venus, wishing to discover if the Cat in her change of shape had also altered her habits of life, let down a mouse in the middle of the room. She, quite forgetting her present condition, started up from the couch, and pursued the mouse, wishing to eat it. Venus, much disappointed, again caused her to return to her former shape.

Nature exceeds nurture.

## THE VINE AND THE GOAT

A VINE was luxuriant in the time of vintage with leaves and grapes. A Goat, passing by, nibbled its young tendrils and its leaves. The Vine addressed him, and said: "Why do you thus injure me without a cause, and crop my leaves? Is there no young grass left? But I shall not have to wait long for my just revenge; for if you now should crop my leaves, and cut me down to my root, I shall provide the wine to pour over you when you are led as a victim to the sacrifice."

## JUPITER AND THE MONKEY

JUPITER issued a proclamation to all the beasts of the forest, and promised a royal reward to the one whose offspring should be deemed the handsomest. The Monkey came with

the rest, and presented, with all a mother's tenderness, a flat-nosed, hairless, ill-featured young Monkey as a candidate for the promised reward. A general laugh saluted her on the presentation of her son. She resolutely said, "I know not whether Jupiter will allot the prize to my son: but this I do know, that he is at least in the eyes of me his mother, the dearest, handsomest, and most beautiful of all."

### THE ASS CARRYING THE IMAGE

AN Ass once carried through the streets of a city a famous wooden Image, to be placed in one of its Temples. The crowd as he passed along made lowly prostration before the Image. The Ass, thinking that they bowed their heads in token of respect for himself, bristled up with pride and gave himself airs, and refused to move another step. The driver seeing him thus stop, laid his whip lustily about his shoulders, and said, "O you perverse dull-head! it is not yet come to this, that men pay worship to an Ass."

They are not wise who take to themselves the credit due to others.

### THE OLD LION

A LION, worn out with years, and powerless from disease, lay on the ground at the point of death. A Boar rushed upon him, and avenged with a stroke of his tusks a long-remembered injury. Shortly afterwards the Bull with his horns gored him as he were an enemy. When the Ass saw that the huge beast could be assailed with impunity, he let drive at his forehead with his heels. The expiring Lion said, "I have reluctantly brooked the insults of the brave, but to be compelled to endure contumely from thee, a disgrace to Nature, is indeed to die a double death."

THE  
MAXIMS OF THEOGNIS

*TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH PROSE*

BY THE

REV. J. BANKS, M.A.

HEAD MASTER OF LUDLOW SCHOOL

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*WITH AN INTRODUCTION UPON*

THE GNOMIC, OR SENTENTIOUS, PHILOSOPHERS  
OF GREECE





## INTRODUCTION

### THE GNOMIC, OR SENTENTIOUS, PHILOSOPHERS OF GREECE

THE beginning of philosophy among the Greeks may be found in the ancient poets, Homer and Hesiod, in the form of sententious advice about the conduct of life. Hesiod in particular was admired for these utterances, which compose a large part of his *Works and Days*. Indeed the wisdom of that time was almost wholly of this practical order. The Seven Wise Men of Greece gained their celebrity through coining homely and pithy maxims of the character of those in Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac*. Of these Wise Men, SOLON (born about B.C. 638), the great Athenian lawgiver, is now the most illustrious name. A friend of Mimnermus, the iambic poet, Solon in his youth wrote poems in a light and amatory strain; as years passed, however, this gave place to the grave tone of reflective wisdom. Had he lived in a later age he would have written in prose. Indeed, it was the later prose writers, such as Demosthenes and Plutarch, that quoted him largely and thus preserved what we now possess of his sententious wisdom. His motto, "Nothing in excess," that is, Observe moderation, is a type of these utterances. These were imitated by other philosophic writers, and he and they have sometimes been classed together as *gnomic* or proverbial poets. Politicians of that day were wont to use verse for very practical purposes. Thus it is told of Solon that, when the Athenians had forbidden anyone to agitate for the recovery of Salamis, Solon put on the guise of a madman and, rushing into the agora, recited a poem urging the matter. His ruse was effective. The law was rescinded, and another expedition was organized against the Megarian possession of the island, and Solon placed in command of it. The war which ensued was prolonged and indecisive, and the issue was brought to arbitration. Here Solon is said to have

gained the victory for Athens by appealing for authority to a line in Homer which Solon himself had fabricated.

The other Seven Sages were as follows:

PITTACUS, of Mitylene, was born about 650 B.C.; he was the deliverer of his country from the Athenians, who, when his grateful countrymen offered him a large amount of land in reward, took but a small portion, and of this dedicated one-half to Apollo, saying, "the half is better than the whole;" other wise utterances of Pittacus were: "Power reveals the man;" "Whatever you do, do well;" "Watch for opportunities;" "Never talk of your plans before they are carried out."

THALES, of Miletus (639-536 B.C.), the founder of Greek natural philosophy, was preeminent both for political sagacity and for personal prudence. One of his personal maxims was: "To be surety brings ruin."

PERIANDER was the tyrant of Corinth; he reigned from 625 to 585 B.C., and his motto was, "Forethought in all things."

CLEOBULUS was the tyrant of Lindus in Rhodes; he lived about B.C. 580, and is credited with the authorship of the saying, "Moderation is the chief good."

BIAS, of Priene in Caria, flourished about B. C. 570. Like Solon, he used poetry for practical purposes. There is a fragment preserved of one of his poems which was designed to encourage Ionian settlement in Sardinia by describing its advantages. When Priene was besieged by Mazares, and the inhabitants were busy packing up their possessions in the prospect of flight, he made no preparations; on a fellow-citizen expressing his astonishment at this, he replied: "I carry everything with me." His motto was, "Too many workers spoil the work."

CHILO, of Sparta, flourished about 550 B.C. His motto was, "Know thyself."

In the age succeeding that of the Seven Sages, the greatest gnomic writer was THEOGNIS. Like Solon he may also be classed among the elegiac and iambic poets, for he wrote in these measures. He was born at Megara about 570 B.C., and lived until the beginning of the Persian Wars, 490 B.C. A noble by birth, he belonged to the oligarchical party of his native city, and all his sympathies were with the aristocrats

and against the common people and the tyrants who rode into power upon popular suffrage. The aristocrats he called the "good" people, and the commons he called "bad" in his verses. Because of his activity in politics he was deprived of his property and banished. Most of his poems were composed in exile. They consisted for the most part of political and moral screeds addressed to his friends, chiefly one Cynus. These writings have come down to us in very disjointed shape, with interpolations by other hands. J. Hookham Frere has done scholarly work in translating the fragments into English verse, and in arranging them in approximately chronological order, with the result of giving a clear view of the personal history of the poet, and of the political history of Megara. Nevertheless, as the chief interest of modern readers is in the sententious wisdom of Theognis, and as this is best rendered in prose, we here present the Rev. J. Banks's literal prose translation of the original text as it has come down to us.

## THE MAXIMS OF THEOGNIS

CYRNUM, let a seal be set on these words of mine, as I pursue wisdom, but it will never escape notice, if it be stolen. Nor will any one take in exchange worse, when the good is present: but thus shall every one say, these are the poems of Theognis, the Megarean, and one celebrated among all men: yet not yet am I able to please all the citizens. No wonder, son of Polypas, for not even doth Jove please all, either when he rains, or when he holds up. But to thee with kind intention I will give advice, Cynus, even such as I myself learned, when yet a boy, from the good.

Be wise, and do not on condition of shameful or unjust acts draw to thyself honours, nor distinctions, nor wealth. These things know thus: and consort not with bad men, but ever cleave to the good: with them eat and drink, sit with them, and please them, of whom there is a large force. For from the good thou shalt learn good, but with the bad if thou shouldst mix, thou wilt lose even the mind thou hast. Learn this, associate with the good, and sometime thou wilt say, that I give good advice to my friends.

Cynus, this city is pregnant: but I fear that it will bring forth a man to be a chastiser of our evil violence.<sup>1</sup> For the citizens here on their part are as yet sober-minded: but the leaders have turned themselves so as to fall into much worthlessness. No city yet, Cynus, have good men ruined; but when it pleases the bad to be insolent, and they corrupt the commons, and give judgments in favour of the unjust, for the sake of private gains and power, expect that that city will not long be kept tranquil, even though now it is settled in much calm, when these gains shall have become dear to the ignoble men, coming along with public hurt. For from these is sedition, and civil bloodshed of men, and to a state such as this a monarch would never be pleasing.

Cynus, this state is still a state indeed: but its people

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<sup>1</sup> Cynus and Theognis were of the aristocratic party.

truly are other, who aforetime knew nor rights nor laws, but were wont to wear out goat-skins about their sides, and to inhabit this city, like stags, without the walls.<sup>1</sup> And now, son of Polypas, they are noble: but they who were better-most of yore, now are of low degree: who can endure to look on these things? They deceive also one another, laughing one at the other, conscious of the sentiments neither of bad nor good. Son of Polypas, get none of these citizens as a friend, with thine whole heart, for the sake of any advantage: but seem indeed to be friend to all in tongue, yet associate with none of them in any serious matter at all. For you will learn the minds of wretched men, that in their deeds there is no reliance. But they have loved tricks, and deceits, and crafts in suchwise, as men no longer in a sound condition.

Never, Cynrus, trustingly consult with a mean man, when you may wish to accomplish a serious matter: but go to a man of worth, and take advice, after you have made great efforts, and accomplished, Cynrus, a long journey afoot.

Not even to all friends communicate wholly a matter: few, look you, of many have a trusty mind. Rely on but few men when you take in hand great deeds, lest ever, Cynrus, you find incurable sorrow.

A faithful man is worthy to be prized equally with gold and silver, O Cynrus, in vexatious doubt. Few men, son of Polypas, will you find, as comrades, proving themselves faithful in difficult circumstances, who would have the courage, possessing a like-minded spirit, to share alike good fortunes and bad. And of these you will not find, by seeking even among all men, such a number in all as one ship would not carry: upon whose tongue as well as eyes a sense of shame is set, nor does gain lead them to a base dealing.

Do not caress me in words, and keep your mind and heart elsewhere, if you love me and if there dwells in you a faithful mind. Either love me, cherishing a sincere mind. or disown and hate me, having raised a quarrel openly. But he

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<sup>1</sup> In this the effects of a revolution at Megara are portrayed. The ancient aristocracy has been driven out by skin-clad tillers of the ground who dwelt aforetime in the country.



who, with one tongue, has yet his mind at variance, this man, Cynus, is a formidable comrade, better as a foe than when a friend.

If a man shall praise you for so long as he sees you, but, when removed elsewhere, launches forth an evil tongue, such a comrade, look you, is not by any means a very good friend, who would say what is most acceptable with his tongue, but thinks differently. But be such an one my friend, who, knowing his comrade, even if he be troublesome in disposition, bears him as a brother. Do you, I pray, my friend, ponder these things in your mind, and at some time hereafter you will remember me.

Let no man persuade thee, Cynus, to love a bad man. For what benefit is that man, if he be a friend? Neither would he rescue you from severe trouble and loss, nor when he has what is good, would he be willing to share this. 'Tis the vainest thanks to one that does good to them of low degree, all one with sowing the wide waters of the gray brine. Since neither if you sow the waters wide would you reap a thick crop, nor benefiting the mean would you be requited in turn with benefit. For the mean have an insatiate mind: if you shall have erred in one thing, spilt is the love arising from all the ancient kindnesses. But the noble in the highest degree receive and enjoy benefits, and retain memory of good deeds, and gratitude in aftertime.

Never make the mean man friend and comrade, but ever fly from him as a bad harbour. Many, look you, are companions in drinking and eating, but fewer in a serious matter. And nought is harder to discern than a friend of base alloy, O Cynus, or of more value than caution. The loss of alloyed gold or silver is to be borne, and it is easy for a shrewd man to detect: but if the mind of a friend within his breast is untrue without your knowledge, and he has a treacherous heart within him, this is the falsest thing that God hath made for man, this the most distressing of all to discern. For you cannot know man's mind nor woman's, before you have proved it, like as of a beast of burden. Nor could you guess it as if at any time you had gone to a ware exposed for sale, for oftentimes appearances deceive the judgment.

Pray, son of Polypas, to be foremost neither in dignity nor wealth: but only let there be luck to a man.

Nought among men is better than a father and mother, to whom holy justice is a care.

No one, Cynrus, is himself the cause of loss and gain: but of both these the gods are givers.

Nor doth any man toil, knowing within his heart as touching the issue, whether 'tis well or ill. For oftentimes thinking that he will bring about evil, he is wont to bring about good, ay, and thinking to cause good, he causes ill. Neither to any man do as many things as he may wish arrive: for the bounds of stern impossibility hinder them. But we men entertain vain thoughts, knowing nothing. The gods accomplish all things after their own mind.

None ever, son of Polypas, having deceived a guest or a suppliant among mortals, has escaped the eye of the immortals.

Choose also rather to live religiously with small means than to be rich, having gotten riches unjustly. In justice is all virtue collectively, yea, and every man, Cynrus, if just, is good. Wealth indeed fortune gives even to a man wholly bad, but excellence attends few men, O Cynrus.

Insolence, O Cynrus, the god is wont to present as the first evil to the man, whom he is about to hold in no esteem. Fulness, look you, breeds insolence, whensoever wealth attends a mean man, and one whose mind is not sound.

Do not ever, having become enraged at a man, O Cynrus, throw in his teeth heart breaking poverty, or base want of means. For Jove, look you, inclines the scale now to one, and now to another, so that while they should be rich, and at another time have nothing.

Never speak in public, Cynrus, big words; for no man knows what a night and day bring about for a man.

Many, I wot, enjoy a mean mind, but a noble fortune: to whom that which seems ill turns out good. There are, too, who toil with both good counsel and ill luck, but accomplishment does not follow their works.

No man is either wealthy or poor, mean or noble, without the help of the gods. One man has one ill, another another; but in strict truth, no one of men whom the sun looks upon is

blest. But whom the gods honour, even he who finds fault, commends, though there is no regard for a man as man.

Pray to the gods, whose is great might; nought happens to man without the gods, either good things or bad.

Poverty most of all things breaks down a noble man, more even, O Cynus, than hoary age and hot ague. And it in truth he ought to flee and to cast it even into the deep, deep sea, and down steep rocks. For every man subdued by poverty can neither say nor do anything, but his tongue is bound. One ought then, Cynus, to seek alike over earth and the broad back of the sea for a riddance from hard poverty. To die, dear Cynus, is better for a poor man than to live worn down by hard poverty.

We seek for well-bred rams, asses, and horses, Cynus, and every one wishes that those from a noble breed should cover. But a well-born man cares not to marry a mean woman, a mean man's daughter if he give her much wealth. No woman refuses to be wife of a mean man if he be rich, but prefers that he be wealthy instead of noble. 'Tis wealth they value; noble man weds mean man's daughter, and mean man the daughter of the noble. Wealth is wont to mix the breed. Then marvel not, son of Polypas, that the race of citizens is obscured, for noble is mixed with base.

The man of rank weds the woman without fame, he himself, look you, leads her home, though he knows that she is base-born, because he is induced by her riches; for stern necessity urges him on, which also makes a man's mind wretched.

But to whatsoever man riches shall have come from Jove, and by just means, and with clean hands, they remain ever steadfastly. Though if a man unjustly shall acquire beyond what is proper with covetous spirit, or by an oath, having taken beyond what is just, at the moment he seems to bear off some gain, but in the end again there is ill, for the mind of the gods is wont to be superior.

But these things deceive the mind of men; for not at the very time of the acts do the immortals take vengeance on errors. But one man in his own person is wont to pay a bitter debt, another attaches ruin hereafter to his own chil-

dren. And another justice does not catch; for unscrupulous death was beforehand sitting on his eyelids, bringing fate.

To an exile, believe me, none is a friend and faithful comrade, and this is more vexatious than banishment itself.

Verily, to drink much wine is bad, but if a man drink it prudently, 'tis not bad but good.

Cyrnus, direct a various habit towards all your friends, mingling with your own the temper which each has. Get thee the temper of the polypus, with tangled twisting arms, which on any rock to which he has attached himself appears such as it is to look upon. Now follow this way, now become different in complexion; the wisdom of versatility is something of a rapid kind. Be not too indignant when citizens are in a state of disturbance, O Cyrnus; but go on the middle path, as I do.

Whoso, look you, thinks that his neighbour knows nothing, but that he himself alone possesses intricate counsels, he, I wot, is senseless, reft of sound mind: for we all are acquainted equally with crafty counsels. But one chooses not to follow filthy lucre, whilst to another faithless wile-weavings are more agreeable.

Now no limit of wealth has been made clear to men, for they who of us now have most substance, strive after twice as much. Who could satisfy all? Riches verily to mortals become folly. And from it up starts ruin, which when Jove shall send upon them worn and weary, one at one time and another at another possesses.

Though he be citadel and tower to an empty-minded populace, Cyrnus, the noble man gets little share of praise. Nor longer, I wot, becomes it us, as men in a state of safety, to destroy, as it were, the walls of a city about to be taken.

To thee indeed I have given wings, wherewith thou wilt fly over boundless deep, and all earth, easily borne aloft; and thou wilt be present at all banquets and feasts, resting in the mouths of many; thee too with sweet-voiced pipes young men gracefully lovely shall sing well and tunelessly; and whensoever thou comest to the much-lamenting homes of Hades, beneath earth's murky vaults, never more, even though dead, shalt thou lose thy renown, nor, I ween, escape notice,



having ever imperishable fame among men, O Cynos, whilst thou tarriest in the land of Greece, or up and down the isles, crossing over the fishy barren deep, and not seated on the backs of horses; but the tasteful gifts of violet-wreathed Muses will convey thee, for with all, to whom, even among posterity, minstrelsy is a care, thou wilt be likewise, as long as there shall be earth and sun. I, however, meet with small reverence from thee, but with words thou deceivest me, as a little child. That which *is* most just is most noble; health most preferable; but the gaining the object of one's love is the most pleasant thing.

I am as it were a well-bred racing mare, but I carry a very mean man: and this to me is most vexatious. Often ere now have I been ready to burst the bridle and flee, having thrust from me my mean charioteer.

Wine is not drunk by me, since with a tender maiden, another man, far meaner than I, has the upper hand. Cold water to my sorrow her dear parents drink with her, so that she at the same time fetches water and bears me groaningly. Then having clasped the damsel round, I kissed her neck, and she spake tenderly with her lips.<sup>1</sup>

Known, look you, is poverty, even though it be strange, for it neither comes to the market nor the law-suits. For everywhere it has the lesser share, and everywhere 'tis mocked: everywhere also, wheresoever it may be, it is equally hostile.

Equally, in truth, to mortal men the gods have given the other things, to wit, wretched old age and youth. But 'tis the worst of all the evils among men, and more unlucky than death and all diseases, after that you have reared children, and afforded them all things suitable, and laid up money for them, having experienced much trouble, if they hate their father, and pray that he may perish, and abhor him as if he were a beggar coming to them.

It is likely that a mean man would ill respect the rules of justice, since he stands in awe of no divine vengeance hereafter. For a worthless mortal may take up many impracti-

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<sup>1</sup> The parents of Theognis' sweetheart are drinkers of cold water. Theognis embraces her as she is coming from the well.



cable things at the moment, and deem that he arranges all well.

Relying on none of the citizens, advance one step, trusting neither oath nor covenant, not even if a man, wishing to give pledges, chooses to give Jove, the supreme king of immortals, as his surety. For verily in a city so malignantly-blaming as this, nothing pleases, and according as any one does, so they are called far the more senseless. But now the ills of the well-born are good things to the mean of men, and become a law to the devious. For a sense of shame hath perished: impudence and insolence, having mastered justice, possess the whole earth.

Neither does a lion always feast on flesh: but him, strong though he be, yet nevertheless perplexity seizes.

To a babbling man silence is the hardest burden, but an unlearned man, if he speak, is so to all in whose presence he may be. All hate him: yet the mixing up of such a man in a banquet is necessary. Nor does he wish to be a friend, when ill has chanced to a man, even though he may have been born of one and the same womb. Be bitter and sweet, harsh and kind, to hired servants and slaves and neighbours near your doors.

It is not meet often to change a good life, but to keep peace: and to alter the ill life, until you have brought it right.

The mean are not wholly mean from the womb, but through having cemented a friendship with mean men. And they have learned worthless works, and slanderous words, and insolence, supposing that all was true which those men said.

Among companions at a meal, be a prudent man; and deem that all escapes his notice, as if absent. Know how to endure jokes, and be brave out of doors, understanding what temper each has.

Among the mad indeed I am exceeding mad; but among the just I am of all men most just.

Many mean men are rich, look you; and noble men are poor, yet with these we will not exchange their wealth for our excellence: for the latter is ever secure, but riches now one and now another of men possesses.

Cyrnus, a noble man hath a judgment always firm, and is

bold when set amidst blessings and amidst ills. But if the god shall present to a mean man substance and wealth, in his folly he is unable to contain his meanness.

Do not ever on a slight pretext ruin a man that is a friend, trusting, Cynrus, to a harsh slander. If a man in every instance should be wrath at the faults of his friends, never would men be in concord or in friendship one with the other. For faults follow after mortal men, Cynrus: but the gods choose not to endure them.

Even the slow man with good counsel hath caught the swift man in the pursuit, Cynrus, with the aid of the straightforward justice of the immortal gods.

Quietly, as I do, pursue the middle way with thy feet, nor give to one party the property of the other, O Cynrus.

Never, Cynrus, kindly treat an exile on the ground of hope, for not even, if he has returned home, does he become any more the same.

Make too much haste in nothing, the mean is best of all: and thus, Cynrus, thou shalt have excellence, which too it is hard to get.

May Jove grant me both requital of my friends, who love me, and that I may be more powerful than my foes. And so should I have the character of being a god among men, if the fate of death should overtake me, when I had recompensed them. But, O Jove, accomplish me, thou Olympian god, a seasonable prayer, grant me to experience in return for ills some good also. But oh might I die, unless I find some cessation from evil cares, and if thou givest but sorrows in return for sorrows. For thus is my lot; and there does not appear to me a means of vengeance on the men who perforce have plundered and possess my property; but like a dog I have crossed a mountain-torrent, having shaken off everything in the rain-swollen stream. Whose black blood may it be mine to drink: and oh, might the good Genius aid me, who would accomplish these things to my mind!

O worthless poverty, why tarriest thou, failing to go to another man? and why, prithee, dost love me, not desiring it? Nay, go, and visit another house, nor along with us be ever sharing this wretched life.

Be of good courage, Cynus, in ills, for amid blessings too thou wast wont to rejoice, when the lot fell to thee to have a share of these too. And even as thou hast received ill out of blessings, even so also, praying to the gods, try to emerge again. Neither display it too much: for when exhibiting any ill, O Cynus, you have but few carers for your calamity.

The heart of a man, look you, O Cynus, having suffered great loss, is weakened; but when he takes vengeance, afterwards it is increased.

Beguile your enemy with good words: but when he shall have come into your power, take vengeance on him, having admitted of no excuse.

Restrain thy mind, and let mildness ever attend thy tongue: the heart, look you, of mean men is more sharp than is meet.

I cannot understand the mind of the citizens, which they entertain: for neither if I do them good, nor ill, do I please them: and many blame me, alike the base-born and the well-born: but none of the unwise can imitate me.

Do not, goading me perforce, and against my will, drive me under the waggon's yoke drawing me, Cynus, too much into friendship.

Kind Jove, I marvel at thee, for thou rulest over all, having honour thyself and vast power. Well knowest thou the mind of men, and the spirit of each; and thy might, O king, is highest of all. How is it then, O son of Saturn, that they purpose has the heart to hold men that are sinners, and the just man, in the same portion, both if thy mind shall have been turned towards moderation, and if towards the insolence of men yielding to unjust deeds? Neither is anything defined by the deity for mortals, nor the way in which walking a man may please the immortals. But nevertheless they hold wealth harmless; while they who keep their mind aloof from worthless deeds, still are wont to find the mother of poverty, want of means, though they love what is just; want of means, which leads on the spirit of men to error, hurting their minds within their bosoms by strong necessity. So a man has the courage, though he wishes it not, to bear many disgraces, yielding to want, which truly teaches many lessons, to wit, falsehoods, deceits, and mischievous strifes, to a man even against his will: and they seem

to him no evil, for it also breeds vexatious lack of means. But in poverty both the mean man, and he who is far better-born are seen, whensoever, I mean, want takes hold on them. For the spirit of the former indulges in unjust thoughts, no, nor even is a right sentiment ever inherent in his breast: but the mind of the latter on the contrary follows neither bad nor good fortunes: it is right however that the bettermost man should have the courage to meet both the one and the other.

Respect your friends, and flee oaths that ruin men: but avoid, and give heed to, the wrath of immortals.

Make too much haste in nothing: in all the works of man the fitting season is best: often a man, seeking gain, is hastening towards rank and honours, whom fortune readily draws astray into a great sin, and is wont to make him deem without difficulty that what is really evil, that is good: but that what is good and useful, that is bad.

Most dear though thou art, thou hast erred; and I, look you, am nowise to blame, but thou thyself hast chanced on sentiments not good.

No treasure wilt thou lay up for thy children better than a sense of shame, which also, Cynus, attends good men.

Of no man, whom judgment and whom power attends, O Cynus, seem thou to be a worse companion.

But when I drink, I am not about to become so drunk, nor does wine lead me on, so far as to speak a harsh word respecting you.

None like me can I find, when I seek a trusty associate, in whom there is no guile. But when I have come to the touchstone I am rubbed beside baser metal, as gold beside lead, and a mind of superiority is in me.

Many things pass me by, even though I am conscious of them: but of necessity I am silent, knowing our power.

To many men well-fitting doors are not set on their tongue, and many things are a care to them, which should be uncared for. For oft that which is bad is better, if stored up within, and good, having come abroad, is better than what is bad.

Of all things indeed to men on the earth, not to be born, and not to see the rays of the piercing sun, is best: but that when born he should, as soon as possible, cross the gates of



Hades, and lie low, having heaped together for himself much earth.

To beget and nurture a child is easier than to implant right feelings: this at all events no one has yet contrived, in making the senseless sensible, and the mean noble; but if a god had granted this, I wot, to the sons of Æsculapius, to cure meanness, and the infatuated minds of men, many and great wages would they earn. And if mind were capable of being created and implanted in man, never would worthless son have been born of worthy father, but he would have been heedful of prudent discourses. But by teaching you will never make the mean man noble.

He is a fool, who has my mind indeed in safe keeping, but pays no attention to his own proper mind.

No one, look you, is in all things blest, but the nobler man has the heart to endure what is evil, and still is not known to all. But the baser man neither in woe nor weal knows how to remain in possession of spirit: the gifts of the gods come variously to mortals; yet it is right to have the courage to hold the gifts of the immortals, such as they give.

If you choose to drench me, undefiled water shall flow ever clear from the top of my head: and you shall find me in all deeds like as refined gold, ruddy to look on, when rubbed by touch-stone: the colour of which from above the dark rust doth not touch, nor mould, but it has its brilliancy always pure.

O man, hadst thou obtained a share of judgment, even as thou hast of folly, and hadst thou been sensible as thou art senseless, to many of these citizens thou wouldst appear an object of envy, just as now thou art nothing worth.

A young woman, look you, is not an expedient thing for an old man: for she, like a light boat, does not heed the rudder, nor do anchors hold her: but, having burst her fastenings, oft in the nights she hath another harbour.

Never set thy mind at least on things impracticable, nor long for wealth, of which there is no accomplishment.

Easily, look you, the gods have given wealth, neither anything mean, nor noble: but there is glory attendant on a difficult work.

Practise yourself about virtue: and let what is just be dear



to you, nor let gain, when it is base, get the upper hand of you.

Force no one of these against his will to remain with us, nor bid any, if he wishes it not, go out of doors. Nor rouse in his sleep, Simonides, whomsoever of us, drunken with wine, soft sleep shall have seized. Neither bid him that is watchful, sleep against his will, for everything done by compulsion is vexatious. And to him that chooses to drink let one stand near and pour out wine: not every night does it happen to us to live delicately. Now I, for I have due measure<sup>1</sup> of sweet wine, will go home, and be mindful of care-relaxing sleep; and I will show that wine is most pleasant for a man to drink, for neither am I a whit sober, nor yet am I very drunk. Now whoso exceeds the due measure of drinking, that man is no longer master of his tongue or mind: but he speaks scandalous words, which, to the sober, seem disgraceful, and nothing is he ashamed to do, whensoever he may be drunk. Though he were sensible before, then he is a fool: do you, then, knowing these things, not drink wine in excess; but either, before you are intoxicated, rise and go, lest your stomach constrain you, like a worthless hireling for the day; or be present, and do not drink: but you, though knowing these things, are ever babbling this foolish word, "pour in:" therefore, look you, you are drunk. For one cup is taken "to friendship;" another is pledged: this you offer as a libation to the gods: the fourth you hold in your hand. And you know not how to say nay; now, look you, that man will be invincible, who, though he drink many cups, shall say nothing silly. But do ye discourse well, tarrying beside the bowl, long keeping off contentions one from the other; speaking fairly and evenly alike to one and with all, and thus a banquet becomes not unpleasant.

Wine belongs to the senseless man as well as the sensible. When, however, it is drunk above measure, it is wont to render the mind light.

In fire, indeed, skilful men try gold and silver, but wine

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<sup>1</sup> Having imbibed his full share of liquor, the poet says he will go home, as the wisest course for a man neither very sober nor quite drunk, lest he should quarrel with his fellow-guests.

is wont to show the mind of a man, even though he be exceeding sensible; wine which when drinking he is wont to praise beyond measure, so as to disgrace one being even wise aforetime.

My head, Onomacritus,<sup>1</sup> is heavy with wine, and wine does violence to me, but I am no longer master of my senses; nay, the chamber whirls round. Come, let me rise and try whether perchance the wine hath my feet too, and my mind within my breast. I fear lest, in my drunkenness, I should do anything foolish, and incur a great disgrace.

Much wine drunk is bad: but if a man drink it with judgment, 'tis not bad but good.

So thou hast come, Clearistus, after having accomplished a passage across the deep sea, hither, wretched man, a beggar to a beggar. Under the ship's sides, truly, we will place benches, Clearistus, such as we have, and as the gods give us: and we will supply the best of what we have: but should any one come, being a friend of thine, say to him, "Sit at meat, an' thou lovest me." I will neither set apart aught of my substance, nor, for the sake of entertaining thee, will we bring aught more from other quarters. Then should any inquire my means of subsistence, thus tell him, that I live with difficulty as regards living well, but very well for one living with difficulty: so as not to fail even one guest of my father's, though I am not able to afford feasts to more men.

Not to no purpose, Plutus,<sup>2</sup> do mortals honour thee most, for of a truth thou bearest distress with ease. For verily it is fitting for the bettermost to have wealth indeed, but poverty is proper for a mean man to bear.

Alas me for youth and wretched old age, the latter coming on, and the former departing.

I have betrayed neither any friend nor trusty comrade, nor is there aught servile in my spirit.

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<sup>1</sup> Onomacritus was a favourite of Hipparchus, the brother of Hippias, and joint ruler with him. Taking the middle of the fourteen years of Hipparchus's reign as the date of these lines, Theognis would be 23 or 24, a likely age at which to have written them.

<sup>2</sup> The god of riches.

Ever is my heart cheered, whensoever I shall have heard the delightful sound of vocal flutes. And I rejoice in drinking well, and in listening to a flute-player; I delight, too, in carrying the gay lyre in my hands.

Never is a slave's head erect, but always crooked, and has the neck askance. For neither from the squill do roses or hyacinths spring, no, nor ever from a bond-woman a free-spirited child.

No man, dear Cyrnus, forges fetters for himself, unless the gods beguile my judgment.

I fear, O son of Polypas, lest insolence, even the insolence which destroyed the savage Centaurs, should ruin this state.

'Tis right that I, O Cyrnus, should adjudicate this cause by rule and square, and deal fair play to both sides, namely, to oracular birds, and to burnt sacrifices, that so I may not incur the foul disgrace of error.

Never do violence to any one through wickedness: for to the just man nought is better than good conduct.

A voiceless messenger stirs up, O Cyrnus, war of many tears, seen clearly as it is from a conspicuous mountain peak.<sup>1</sup> Nay, then, place bridles on your swift-footed steeds, for methinks that they will encounter hostile men: nor long the way which they will traverse between us and the foe, unless the gods deceive my judgment.

It behoves a man lying in severe griefs to take heart, and to ask deliverance from them at the hands of the immortal gods.

Consider: the danger, look you, stands on a razor's edge: at one moment you shall have much: at another far fewer possessions: so that you neither become exceeding rich in possessions, no, nor thrust yourself into much want of means.

Be it mine to have somewhat myself, but to bestow the most of the riches of foes on my friends to enjoy.

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<sup>1</sup> The march of a force from some neighbouring state, opposed to the politics of Cyrnus and Theognis, is indicated by a fire-signal, and determines them to abandon their country without delay.

Now 'tis meet that one should be invited to a banquet, and sit beside a worthy man, versed in all wisdom, so as to understand him whensoever he shall utter aught of wisdom, that so you may be instructed, and go home to your house with this gain.

Delighting myself in youth I sport and sing: for, when I have lost my life, I shall lie long beneath the earth, like a voiceless stone: and shall quit the delightful light of the sun, and, though I be a man of worth, yet shall see nothing any more.

Opinion, indeed, is a great evil to men, but experience a very excellent thing: many of the bettermost men have an opinion unproved by experience.

Do good, and good shall be done by you: but wherefore send you another messenger? the tidings of a benefit is easy.

My friends abandon me, yes, because I avoid my enemy, as pilot avoids the low rocks in the sea.

'Tis easier to make a mean man out of a bettermost man, than a noble man of a base: teach me not: I am not of an age to learn.

I hate a mean man: and I veil myself when I approach him, having the volatile spirit of a little bird. I hate also a roaming woman, and a wanton man, who desires to plough the furrow of another. But the things which have gone by, it is impossible should become undone: the future, however, be that a care to our caution.

Danger, I wot, is attendant on all works, neither knoweth any one, when a matter begins, where he is likely to land. But the man who endeavours to be popular, without forethought, is wont to fall into great and severe ruin. Him however who doeth well it is the deity that invests with everything, with lucky chances, and riddance from folly.

It is right to endure what the gods give to men, and to bear easily the lot of both classes. Neither when distressed with ills be vexed at heart, nor be delighted on a sudden with good fortune, before you have seen the extreme end.

Good Sir, let us be companions one to another at a distance. There is satiety of everything save wealth. Long then



let us be even friends; but do thou associate with other men also, who better know thy mind.<sup>1</sup>

You have not escaped my notice as you walked along the road, on which even aforetime you used to drive, stealing my friendship. Away with you, hateful to gods, and faithless to men, you who had in your bosom a chilly spotted snake.

Such like deeds, such insolence, ruined the Magnesians also, as now possesses this sacred city.

Fulness hath ere now destroyed far more men, look you, than famine, to wit, as many as were desirous of having more than their share.

At the beginning a lie gets small thanks, but at last base lucre, in truth, and ill arise, both of them: nor is there anything noble to any man, whom a lie attends, even though it be the first that has gone forth from his mouth.

It is not hard to blame one's neighbour, no, nor to praise him: these things are a care to mean men. And mean men do not choose to be silent, prating mischief rather, but the noble know how to preserve moderation in all things.

No one of the present race of men doth the sun look down upon, being entirely good and moderate.

Not to any great extent are all things accomplished to men's liking, for immortals are far superior to mortals.

I am much tost about in difficulties, being vexed at heart: for we have not outrun extreme poverty.

Every one honours a rich man, but dishonours a poor: and in all men there is the same mind.

All kinds of baseness exist among men, and all kinds of excellence, and devices for livelihood.

'Tis hard for a sensible man to speak much among the senseless, and so it is always to be silent: for this is impossible.

In truth, 'tis disgraceful for a drunken man to be amongst sober men: and disgraceful if a sober man remains among the drunken.

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<sup>1</sup> A gentle hint from Theognis to a friend that he wishes to drop his intimacy, which hint he softens by suggesting that variety is pleasing in the matter of friends, as in other things.



Man's estate and youth lighten a man's mind, and stir up the spirits of many to error.

Whoso hath not a mind that is master of his inclinations, he, I wot, Cynrus, lies ever in follies, and in great errors.

Consult twice and thrice on whatever shall have come into your mind, for a hasty man, look you, is hurried to ruin.

Judgment and sense of shame attend men that are good, who now are really few among the many.

Hope and hazard are alike among men: for both these are severe deities.

Often beyond both expectation and hope it is given men to discover the works of men, but success is not wont to follow their counsels.

A single individual, look you, troubles neither one well affected, nor his foe, unless he meet with a serious matter. Many are friends and comrades over the bowl, but fewer in a serious matter.

Few companions would you find faithful protectors, when you are placed in great perplexity of spirit.

Now at length a sense of shame hath perished among mankind, but shamelessness roams over the earth.

Thou luckless poverty, why, seated on my shoulders, dost thou disgrace my body and mind? Nay, thou teachest me against my will perforce many disgraceful arts, though I know from men good and noble lessons.

May I be fortunate, and dear to the immortal gods, O Cynrus; then am I eager for no other excellence.

Along with thee, Cynrus, when thou hast suffered misfortune, we are all distrest: but of a truth grief for another lasts but for a day.

In hard fortunes be not at all excessively disgusted at heart, neither rejoice in prosperity: for 'tis a noble man's course to bear all things.

Nor is it right to swear this, "that this thing shall never be," for the gods also, in whose hands is the issue, are wroth.

Yet still one ought to do somewhat: both good hath arisen from ill, and ill from good; ay, and the poor man very quickly becomes rich, while he who has possessed very much on a sudden is wont to lose everything, in fact, in a single

night. And sensible man errs, and glory oft attends a senseless man: honour too even a mean man is wont to obtain.

If I had wealth, Simonides,<sup>1</sup> even such as I was acquainted with, I should not be vexed at associating with the noble. But now they (riches) pass me by, though I knew them, and I am mute through poverty, though still knowing better than many. Wherefore we are borne on now, having pulled down our white sails, from the Melian Sea, through murky gloom: but they do not choose to bale the ship, and the sea surmounts both the vessel's sides, whereby with great difficulty any one saves himself: yet the sailors are slumbering, and have made the pilot, good though he was, cease from his work, the pilot who used to watch over it understandingly. By force they plunder property, order is upset, and no longer is there an equal distribution in common: but the porters bear rule, and the mean are above the noble. I fear lest haply the waves should engulf the ship. Let thus much have been wrapt in riddles darkly, for the men of worth; but a man, if he be wise, would be cognizant also of the evil.

Many dunces have riches, but others seek what is noble, though harassed by severe poverty: but impossibility of working lies beside both: the one class want of riches impedes, want of intellect the other.

'Tis impossible for mortals to strive against immortals, or to deal out justice. To none is this permitted.

It is not right to cherish what should not be cherished, nor to do what it were better to leave unaccomplished.

With satisfaction mayest thou duly perform thy voyage through the great sea, and may Neptune bring thee home, a joy to thy friends.

Many men, look you, being senseless, has fulness ruined, for 'tis hard to understand moderation, when good things are present.

In truth, O my spirit, I cannot afford thee all things fit-

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<sup>1</sup> Theognis declines an invitation from his rich friend Simonides, pleading that his misfortunes render him little fitted for the company of the literati whom he should meet, and who are of the dominant political party that he opposes.

ting. Bear up: for not by any means thou alone art fond of what is beautiful.

When I am flourishing, friends are many; but should any calamity have chanced upon me, few retain a faithful spirit. For to the multitude of men there is this virtue only, namely, to be rich: but of the rest, I wot, there is no use.

Not even though you should have the sense of Rhadamanthus himself,<sup>1</sup> and be more knowing than Sisyphus, son of Æolus; (even he who by his cunning came up again from Hades, after having persuaded Proserpine by wily words, Proserpine, who gives oblivion to mortals, and misleads their mind: and never hath any other devised this, I ween, whomsoever in truth the black mist of death has enshrouded, and he has come to the chilly place of the dead, and crossed the dark portals which confine the souls of the dead, even though they refuse: yet, verily, even thence came back the hero Sisyphus to the light of the sun through his own exceeding shrewdness;) nor if you could make falsehoods like to truths, having the skilful tongue of the god-like Nestor, and were swifter of foot than the fleet Harpies, and the sons of Boreas, whose feet go swiftly. Nay, then, 'tis right that all should lay up this maxim, that wealth has the most power among all.

Equally rich, look you, are he to whom there is much silver and gold, and plains of wheat-producing earth, horses and mules; and he to whom that which is needful is ready, so that he may enjoy himself in pleasures of stomach, sides, and feet; and boys and women: for when the fitting season of these shall have arrived, and at the same time their youthful prime is suitable, these are wealth to mortals: for no one goes to Hades with all his immense wealth. Neither by paying ransom can he escape death, or heavy diseases, or wretched old age coming upon him.

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<sup>1</sup>Rhadamanthus was a son of Zeus and Europa, and a brother of Minos, king of Crete, and became a judge in Hell after death. Sisyphus was a son of Æolus and Enarete. Before death he bade his wife not to bury him; and then in the lower world made this a plea to Proserpine for being allowed to return to the upper world. Thence he was brought back to punishment only by the force of Hermes.

O Father Jove, would that it might please the gods, that their insolence should delight sinners; and that this might be agreeable to their mind, namely, that whoso ruthlessly works daring deeds in his heart, nowise standing in awe of the gods, that he, I say, thereafter should atone for his evil deeds; and that the father's infatuation should not in aftertime be a woe to the children. But that children, who, being born of an unjust sire, know and do justice, reverencing thy wrath, O son of Cronus, and from the very first loving the right amongst the citizens, should not pay the penalty for any transgression of their sires. May these things be agreeable to the blessed gods: but now he that commits wicked deeds escapes, and another presently suffers the punishment. Then how, O king of immortals, is it just, that whoso is aloof from unrighteous deeds, holding no transgression, nor sinful oath, but being righteous, should suffer what is not just? What other mortal, too, I pray, when he looks at this man, would afterwards stand in awe of the gods, and entertaining what feeling? When an unrighteous, infatuated man, having avoided the wrath neither of any man nor of the immortals in anywise, doeth wrongs, and is glutted with wealth; whereas the righteous are wasted, being worn out by severe poverty.

Having learned this, dear comrade, get riches justly, keeping a prudent spirit, afar from blind folly, and ever remembering these my words; then at the last you will commend me, giving heed to a wise speech.

May Jove, dwelling in heaven, hold on high his right hand ever over this city for its health and safety, as well as the other immortal blessed gods; but may Apollo nerve my tongue and mind: and on the other hand let the holy melody sound with lyre, and also flute; but let us, having made full drink-offerings to the gods, drink and speak pleasantly one with the other, in no wise fearing the war of the Medes. So be it! and, better still, be it ours, enjoying a cheerful spirit, aloof from cares to pass our days cheerily, and delight ourselves, and to drive far away ill fates, wretched age, and the end of death.

'Tis meet that the Muses' servant and messenger, if he know aught special of wisdom, should not begrudge it: but



should seek after some things, point out some, and invent others; alone knowing for what purpose he should use them.

O sovereign Phœbus, thou thyself fencedst the citadel in favour to Alcathous, son of Pelops; do thou then ward off from this city the insolent army of Medes, that so thy people, in cheerfulness, as spring comes on, may send thee splendid hecatombs, delighting themselves with lyre, and lovely festival, with choirs of pæans, and shoutings around thine altar. For of a truth I fear, when I look on the folly and people-destroying seditions<sup>1</sup> of the Greeks. Yet do thou, Phœbus, propitiously guard this our city. For I have gone aforetime both to the Sicilian land, and I have gone to Eubœa's wine-clad plain, and to Sparta, splendid city of reed-nursing Eurotas, and all did with alacrity entreat me kindly when I came. But no pleasure in them came over my spirit; so much, I wot, is nought else dearer than our father-land.

Never may other fresher care present itself to me, in place of charming wisdom; but may I ever, possessing this, delight myself with lyre, with dance, and song; and with these blessings may I have a noble mind.

Harming by baneful deeds neither any stranger nor any of your townsmen, but, being just, delight your own mind: and of the unfeeling citizens some will speak ill of you, others better.

The noble one man blames much: another praises: but of the mean there is no record: but of men unblamed is none upon the earth; and 'tis best for him, of whom there is no care to the greater number.

No one of men will either be, or hath been, born, who will go down to Hades pleasing to all. For not even he who reigns over mortals and immortals, Jove, son of Cronus, can please all mortals.

It behoves, indeed, a man that goeth to consult the oracle, Cyrnus,<sup>2</sup> to keep more straightly than compasses, line, or rule;

<sup>1</sup> Theognis appears to have lived till after the Persian Invasion in 490 B.C. His fears for the divided states of Greece are shown by history to have been just; though Athens and Sparta for the time laid aside their rivalry.

<sup>2</sup> From this passage it is inferred that Cyrnus was old enough, and



such a man, I mean, as he to whom the god at Pytho, having given answer to the priestess, shall have indicated a prophecy from his rich sanctuary; for neither though you add aught would you discover any remedy, nor if you have diminished aught, would you escape the punishment of offence, on the part of the gods.

I have experienced a thing nowise inferior to an unseemly death, but of all other things most vexatious, O Cyrnus. My friends have cast me off: so I, having drawn near to mine enemies, am about to see also what mind they have.

An ox, stamping on my tongue with sturdy foot, restrains me from chattering, though I am versed in it, O Cyrnus. But still it is impossible to escape from what is fated to suffer; and what I am fated to suffer I nowise fear to endure. Into a vast unspeakable evil are we come, wherein above all, O Cyrnus, the fate of death may seize us both together.

But they who dishonour their parents, when growing old, for these, Cyrnus, there is no place of esteem.

Neither aid any tyrant in the hopes that 'tis matter of gain,<sup>1</sup> nor slay him, when you have entered into covenants sworn before the gods.

How hath our spirit had the heart to sing to the flute-player?<sup>2</sup> but from the forum is seen the limit of the land, which maintains with her fruits men wearing at feasts and on auburn locks purple garlands. Nay, come now, Scythian, shave thy hair, and cease from revelling, and lament the fragrant country lost.

By faith have I lost wealth, and by unbelief preserved it: but the counsel of both is difficult. All this my property is with the crows and in ruin: nor is any of the immortal blessed gods to blame in my judgment: but man's violence, and much

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of sufficient standing in the city, to be sent to Delphi as a sacred envoy to bring back an oracle, which the poet exhorts him to preserve faithfully.

<sup>1</sup> These lines refer to the assassination of Hipparchus.

<sup>2</sup> The poet's piping in the market-place of Megara finds a sudden ending, as he sees from it the fruits of harvest being brought home from fields once his own, to other barns.

gain, and wrong have thrust me out of many good things into poverty.

There are two fates truly of drinking to wretched mortals, limb-relaxing thirst, and baneful drunkenness. Now between these I shall abide, nor will you persuade me either not to drink at all, or to be excessively drunken. Wine, indeed, in other respects is agreeable to me, but in one 'tis disagreeable, to wit, when, having made me drunk, it leads me against a foe. But when one, being properly above, shall have been lowered, then 'tis meet he should go home, having ceased from drinking.

To upset a man well established is easy; but to set right that which is ill settled, is difficult.

Spurn the empty-spirited rabble,<sup>1</sup> strike them with sharp goad, and place around them a galling yoke. For no more will you find a populace so fond of despots, among all men, as many as the sun looks down upon.

May Olympian Jove destroy the man who chooses to deceive his comrade, prating smoothly to him. I knew indeed even before, but much better now, that the mean have no gratitude.

Oft hath this city through the baseness of its rulers, like a ship wandering out of its course, driven past the land.

But if any of my friends sees me in any trouble, turning his head away, he does not even choose to look on me: yet if any good comes to me from any quarter, such as often happen to a man, I find many greetings and friendships.

My friends forsake me, and will not give me aught, when men appear: but I of my own accord go out at eve, and come in again at dawn, when the voice of wakening cocks is heard.

To many useless men the god gives good wealth, which being nothing, is better neither to itself nor its friends. But the great glory of martial excellence will never perish, for a warrior saves both country and city.

Then may the broad brazen vault of heaven fall on me from above, that terror of men of olden time, if I shall not

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<sup>1</sup> These lines are an ironical exhortation to the ruler of the opposite faction to make the best use of his opportunity.

help them indeed who love me: but be to my foes a vexation and great source of loss.

Wine, I in part commend thee, partly blame: neither can I wholly either ever hate or love thee. Good art thou, and bad. Nay, who would blame thee? or who praise thee, if he has due measure of wisdom?

Drink wine, which to me from the top of Taygetus vines have borne, which the old man, beloved by the gods, Theotimus, planted in the mountain glades, introducing cold water from the grove of plane trees. Drinking of which, thou wilt dispel harsh cares, and when thou hast well drunk, wilt be far the lighter.

May peace and wealth possess the state, that I may revel with others, for I love not baneful war. Neither do thou too much lend an ear, when the herald shouts loud and far: for we are not fighting for our father-land. Yet 'tis disgraceful, when present and mounted on fleet-footed steeds, not to look upon tearful war.

Alas me, for our cowardice! Cerinthus is undone, and the goodly vineyard of Lelantum is stript. The noble flee; the mean administer the state: would Jove might destroy the Cypselizing race!"<sup>1</sup>

Nought better than judgment hath a man in himself, I wot, or more vexatious, Cynrus, than lack of judgment.

Cynrus, be not in all respects wroth with mortal men, knowing that you have a mind, like as each man has, in your breast, and deeds also. To mortals, whether the just man, or the unjust, great loss may ensue. Of each man one act is worse, another better: but no man is himself wise in all respects.

Whoso watches expenditure, hunting after riches, has the most distinguished excellence in the sight of men of understanding.

For if it were possible to ascertain the end of life, to wit, how much time having accomplished, a man were fated to go to Hades, it would be reasonable that he, who awaited his destiny

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<sup>1</sup> The democratic party, dominant in Megara, and which Theognis opposed, sided with the Cypselid dynasty of Corinth.

the longer time, should most spare the substance which he had. But now 'tis not so: a circumstance which really rouses great vexation in me, and I am heart-worn, and have my mind in doubt. So I stand in a cross-road, and there are two roads in front of me; I consider on which of these I am to proceed first: either being at no expense I waste my life in wretchedness; or, accomplishing but few works, I live pleasantly. For I, too, have seen a man who was careful, and never would allow his stomach food fit for a free man, rich though he was: yet ere he had finished he descended within Pluto's mansion, and the chance comer from among men received his wealth; so that he toiled in vain and did not give as a man could wish. Another have I seen, who indulging his appetites squandered his wealth, and said, "I delight my soul, and then retire:" but he begs of all his friends, wheresoever he may have seen one. Thus, Damocles, 'tis best of all to regulate your expenditure according to your means, and to pay attention to this; for neither will you then toil first, and give another a share in the fruit of your toil; nor will you finish your servitude a beggar; no, nor, should old age come, will all your wealth flee away: for in such a class as this 'tis best to have riches: since if you are rich, you will have many friends; but should you be poor, then few: and then no longer is the same man equally good.

'Tis best to spare: since not even does any one wail for the dead, unless he sees wealth left behind.

Few among men doth worth and beauty attend: happy he who hath obtained both of these: all honour him: the young alike, and his equals in age, and his elders give place to him.

I cannot sing tunelessly with my voice, like a nightingale, for the last night I went to a revel. Nor do I set up the piper as an excuse; but a comrade, no wise lacking sense, fails me. Close to the piper will I sing, standing here on the right, and praying to the immortal gods.<sup>1</sup>

I will walk by rule on the straight path, swerving to neither side: for 'tis meet I should entertain all right views. I will distinguish my bright native city, neither having brought

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<sup>1</sup> This fragment is an apologetic acceptance of an invitation to sing.



myself under the power of the commonalty, nor complying with unjust men.

Though having overtaken with my feet, as a lion trusting in his strength, a fawn from a stag, yet have I not drunk its blood: and though I have mounted lofty walls, I have not sacked the city; though I have yoked my steeds, I have not set foot in my chariot. I have accomplished and yet not accomplished, succeeded and yet not succeeded, done yet not done, achieved yet not achieved.<sup>1</sup>

There are two evils to him that doth good to the mean man: he will both be stript of his own many possessions, and get no thanks.

If, after having experienced some great good from me, you are not thankful, may you come again a beggar to my house.

While I was drinking alone of the dark-water spring,<sup>2</sup> methought the water was of a sweet and limpid nature; but now hath it been polluted; water is mixt with water: I will drink then of other fountain or river.

Never praise before that you shall have clearly known as to a man, the temper, disposition, bent, which he is of. Many, look you, having a base and wily nature, hide it, having put on themselves a spirit to last the day, but of each of all these time discloses the character: for I too, I wot, have gone far wide of my judgment, and have been before hand in praising you, ere I had thoroughly learned your character: but now at length, as a ship, I stand far apart.<sup>3</sup>

But what excellence is it to drink and carry off the prize of wine? oft verily even the worthless man surpasses the worthy.

There is no one of mortals, who, when once earth shall cover him, and he shall have descended to Erebus and the abode of Proserpine, delights therein, because he neither hears lyre nor piper, nor lifts to his lips the gifts of Bacchus. Seeing

<sup>1</sup> An epigram of unsuccessful love; Theognis is a lover who has hunted down his game yet fails to secure it.

<sup>2</sup> Theognis determines to abandon a mistress whose love for every one has made her too indiscriminate for his taste. He, too, will henceforth be a more general admirer.

<sup>3</sup> To escape injury from collision.



these things, I shall feel well at heart, so long as untremblingly I carry light limbs and head.

Be no man friend to me in tongue, but in deed too: and let him be active both with hands and means. Neither let him delight my spirit with words over cups, but show by acts if he can do aught good.

Let us then stake our dear spirits on festivals, while yet they can bear the delightful works of enjoyment. For quickly as thought passes brilliant youth, neither is the speed of coursers fleeter, even those which impetuously bear a spear-brandishing warrior to the struggle of men, whilst they exult in the wheat-bearing plain.

Drink when men drink: but when thou shalt have been at all disgusted in spirit, let no man know that thou are troubled. One while, look you, you will grieve at suffering, and at another, doing, you are able to rejoice, and at different times you are a different man.

Would it was allowed, *Academus*,<sup>1</sup> that thou shouldst chant a lovely hymn, and that a slave in the fair flower of youth might be the prize proposed to thee and me contendng on the score of skill—then shouldst thou know how much better are mules than asses.

But when the sun indeed just now cheers on his solid-hoofed steeds in æther, holding the middle of the day, then cease we from dinner, to go whither inclination leads every one, gratifying the appetite with all manner of good things; and let a comely *Lacedæmonian* maiden with slender hands quickly bring out water, and carry in the garlands.

But excellence, this is the noblest prize among men, and the most fair for a wise man to bear off; and this is a common blessing to every city and people, he who with broad stride stands fast amid the first ranks.

Now I will counsel men for their common good, that every one enjoying the bright bloom of youth may also entertain sound thoughts in his heart, to enjoy the good, each of his own possessions: for twice to grow young is not given by the gods, neither is there to mortal men an escape from death: but bane-

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<sup>1</sup> He had called *Theognis* a mule, from the hybrid nature of his muse.

ful and destructive old age overpowers them, and touches the tops of their heads.

How blest and fortunate and lucky he, who hath descended to Hades' dark mansion, without having experienced troubles, before that he has made his enemies cower, and overcome them even perforce, and ascertained what spirit his friends have.

Straightway perspiration without measure flows down my skin, and I am fluttered when I look at the prime of my equals in age, delightsome alike and beautiful; for it ought to be of longer duration, but like a dream, precious youth is a short-lived thing: and presently over head hangs unhappy and unsightly old age.

Never will I place my neck under the galling yoke of my enemies, not even though Tmolus is above my head.

To the meaner sort their minds are more empty through baseness: but the doings of the noble are always more direct.

The practice of mischief, look you, among men is easy: but the method of good, Cynos, is difficult.

Take courage, mine heart, in troubles, e'en though you have suffered things unendurable: the heart of the baser sort, look you, is ever too hasty. Neither do you, at any rate, aggravating your chagrin at works that have been unaccomplished, bear hate, nor be indignant: neither vex your friends. Nor delight your enemies: for the destined awards of the gods not easily could mortal man escape, either if he descended to the bottom of the dark lake, or when murky Tartarus holds him.

To beguile a noble man, look you, is most difficult, as it hath long been decided, Cynos, in my judgment. I knew it indeed even before, but much better now: that the mean have no gratitude.

Senseless and fools are the men who drink not wine when the dog-star rises. Come hither, with the aid of the piper let us laugh and drink beside one that weeps, whilst we delight in his griefs. Let us sleep: and the watching over the city shall be the warder's care, the watch over our lovely rockless fatherland. Yes, by Jove, if any of these sleeps even wrapped up, he will listen to our revelling eagerly. Now let us drink and enjoy ourselves, speaking fairly: and what shall be hereafter, that is the gods' concern.

To you now, as to a dear child, I myself will give sound advice; and do you ponder these things in your heart and mind. Never do any evil hastily, but deliberate in the deep of your heart, and with your better mind. For of them that contend, 'tis the heart and the mind that contend; but counsel leads to a **good and sound mind**.

But this account we will let pass. Do thou however pipe to me: and both of us will be mindful of the Muses. For they have given these delightful gifts to hold, to thee, and me, and in truth to the dwellers all around.

Timagoras, 'tis hard for one seeing from far, to understand the temper of many, even though he be wise. For some have meanness disguised by riches; and others rank by ruinous poverty.

But in youth 'tis best to sleep beside an equal in age, satisfying the desire of works of love: 'tis better too to sing with a piper accompanying you, when you go a revelling: than this nought, look you, else is more delightsome to men and women. What to me are riches and dignity? Delight along with good cheer surpasses everything.

Senseless and childless are the men, who mourn for the dead, and not the flower of manhood, when it perishes.

Prithee, delight thyself, dear heart: soon will there be some other men, and I in death shall be black earth.

Cyrnus, direct a various temper of mind towards all your friends, mingling such a character as each is of. One while follow this character; at another be diverse in your nature: a better thing, look you, is wisdom than great excellence.

Of a thing unaccomplished 'tis most hard to know the end. how the god will accomplish this. For gloom is spread over it, and previous to that which is about to be, the bounds of human helplessness are not to be understood.

No one of mine enemies will I blame, if he be noble; no, nor will I commend a friend, if he be a mean man.

Thus it behoves the well-born man. I wot, directing his thoughts to it, to keep them ever stedfast until the end to a friend. You needs must bear worthily many unpleasant things, since you know not how to do that which is not pleasant to yourself.

Castor and Pollux, ye who dwell in divine Lacedæmon on the Eurotas, beautifully-flowing streams, if ever I should devise evil for a friend, may I myself find it: but should he devise aught against me, may he find twice as much.

My mind is distressed respecting your friendship: for I can neither love nor hate you: knowing as I do that 'tis hard to hate, after one has been a friend to a man; and hard to love a man without his concurrence. Look therefore now to another; to me at least there was no restraint to do these: namely, the kindnesses, for which aforetime you were grateful to me.

Now even on wings am I uplifted, like a bird from a vast marsh, having escaped from a base man, and having dragged away my neck. But you, when you have lost my friendship, will afterwards be sensible of my prudence, no matter who it was that counselled you concerning me, and bade you go away, and abandon my friendship.

Insolence hath ruined both the Magnesians, and Colophon, and Smyrna: Cyrnus, it will certainly ruin us likewise. But having been put to the test, and being rubbed beside lead, as being refined gold, you will be fair to all.

Ah wretched me! for now have I become a laughing stock to foes, and to my friends a trouble, having suffered sadly.

O Cyrnus, they who were noble aforetime, are now on the other hand mean: and those who were base before, are now noble; who can endure to look upon these things, to wit, the noble more dishonoured, and the baser sort obtaining honour? whilst the well-born man espouses a wife from a mean man's house. So deceiving each other they exult one over the other, cherishing remembrance neither of good nor bad.

Possessing riches, you have reproached me with poverty: but something I have, and something more I shall make, after having paid my vows to the gods.

O wealth, of all gods fairest and most delightful, with thy aid, e'en though mean, I become a noble man.

May I have youth's prime, and may Latona's son, Phœbus Apollo, love me, and Jove, sovereign of immortals; that so I may live my life aloof from all ills, delighting my spirit with youth and riches.



Remind me not of ills: I have suffered, look you, such treatment as Ulysses; who went to the vast mansion of Hades, and came up again from it; Ulysses, who, prudent as in truth he was, also slew with pitiless steel the suitors of Penelope, his wedded spouse, she who had long awaited him, while she remained abiding beside his dear son, until he set foot in the land, and trod the terror causing inmost corners.

If I but drink, I care not for spirit-wasting poverty, nor hostile men, who speak ill of me. But I lament for delightful youth, which is failing me: and I bewail troublesome old age coming upon me.

Cyrnus, for present friends we will stay the beginning of ill: and let us seek remedies for the growing wound.

Hope alone remains a kind goddess among mortals, the rest have abandoned us, and gone to Olympus.

Gone is Faith, a mighty goddess: gone from men Temperance: the Graces too, my friend, have quitted earth, and just oaths are no more to be relied on among men, neither does anyone reverence the immortal gods. But the race of holy men hath waned, nor are they any longer sensible of ordinances, no, nor holy lives. Yet so long as a man lives, and beholds the light of the sun, acting piously as regards the gods, let him wait on Hope. And let him pray to the gods, burning also splendid thighs of victims, and to Hope let him sacrifice first and last. And let him ever muse on the perverted language of unjust men, who, nowise reverencing the immortal gods, are ever setting their thoughts on the possessions of others, having attached shameful marks to evil deeds.

Never let go your present friend, and seek out another, complying with the words of meaner men.

Be it mine to be rich, aloof from evil cares, and to live harmlessly, meeting with no ill.

I neither long nor pray to be rich: but be it mine to live on my little store, and find no hurt.

Wealth and wisdom are a matter most irresistible ever: for neither could you over-fill the desire with wealth; and in like manner the wisest man doth not shun wisdom, but longs after it: yet cannot satisfy his desire therewith.

No treasure is it better to lay up for your children; yet



give it, Cynrus; to noble men when they crave it. For no man is in all respects all blessed: but the noble man has resolution to keep his misfortune, albeit not manifest to all. whilst the meaner person knows not how to keep his spirit even alike, in prosperity or in adversity. But on mortals fall various behests of the immortals; to endure then the gifts of the immortals, such as they give men to have, it is meet.

In prudent men, eyes, tongue, and ears, and man's intelligence are by nature in the midst of their breasts.

Company with the noble: but never follow the base, whensoever you are finishing a journey or your traffic. Of the noble noble is the answer, noble the works: but of the baser sort the winds carry away the worthless words. From evil company come ills: and well wilt thou too understand this, since thou hast erred against the mighty immortals.

The gods, O Cynrus, give judgment as the best boon to mortals: judgment hath the issues of every man. O happy he that truly hath it in his mind. Verily it is far superior to dangerous insolence and wretched satiety. But satiety is an evil to mortals: than which two nought is more evil; for all mischief, Cynrus, is from these.

Would that, O Cynrus, thou mightest be clear from suffering and doing disgraceful deeds; then wouldst thou have greatest experience in virtue.

Cynrus, reverence and fear the gods; for this prevents man either from doing or saying unholy things.

To lay low a tyrant that grindeth down his people, even as you will, is no call for wrath on the part of the gods.

Good sense and good speech, these things are by nature in but few men, who are masters of both these.

No one by paying ransom can escape death or severe misfortune, unless fate impose an issue. Neither can mortal man, though he wish it, by gifts escape anxieties, to wit, when the god sends griefs.

I desire not to lie in regal couch when dead; but be mine some good thing whilst I am yet alive. Prickles, I ween, to a dead man are a like couch to embroidered carpets; the wood is either hard or soft: it matters not.

Neither swear by the gods a perjured oath, for it is not endurable to hide from the immortals a debt that is due.

I hear, son of Polypas, the voice of the shrill-crying crane, even her, who to mortals comes as harbinger of the season for ploughing; and it smote my dark heart that others possess my flourishing fields, neither do my mules drag the bent yoke of the plough, on account of that ever to be remembered voyage.

I will not go, neither shall a tyrant be lamented by me, nor go beneath the earth with wailing over his tomb. No, nor would he, if I were dead, either be grieved, or let fall warm tears adown his eyes.

I neither forbid you, nor invite you, to revel: you will be troublesome, when present, and friendly, whensoever you are absent.

I am Æthion by family:<sup>1</sup> but, forced from my fatherland, I dwell in Thebes, a well-fortified city. Mock me not rudely, Argyris, nor abuse my dear parents: for upon you presses the day of servitude; but for me, woman, there are many other ills indeed, for I am an exile from my country; yet distressing slavery hangs not over me, nor do men export us for sale, and even for us indeed there is a fair city, situate in oblivion's plain.

Never let us sit down and laugh beside them that mourn, O Cynrus, delighting ourselves in our own advantages.

To deceive an enemy, indeed, and ill-affected man, is hard, Cynrus: but for a friend to deceive a friend is easy.

Nought, Cynrus, is more unjust than anger, which hurts its possessor, by meanly indulging passion.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing, Cynrus, is more sweet than a good wife: I am a witness, and be thou so to me of my truthfulness.

Speech is wont to bring many false steps to mortal men, when the judgment, Cynrus, is disturbed.

The cares of men have had allotted to them, and possess,

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<sup>1</sup> This is part of the indignant reply of our poet to Argyris a female slave, who was engaged in singing at a banquet, and questioned the noble birth of Theognis.

<sup>2</sup> This and the following are verses ascribed by various writers to Theognis.

various wings, being divided for the sake of spirit and subsistence.

Be young, dear heart: soon will there be some other men; and I, having died, shall be dark earth.

But growing old, he is distinguished among the citizens, nor does any wish to hurt him, in point of respect or justice.

On no one, Cynrus, do the rays of the sun that giveth light to men look down, over whom blame doth not hang. But I am not able to ascertain what mind the citizens entertain, for neither when I do good nor ill do I satisfy them.

For heretofore hath a marine corpse invited me home,<sup>1</sup> though dead, yet speaking with living voice.

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<sup>1</sup> The allusion here is to the spiral shell called cochlea, which the Tritons were supposed to have used as trumpets.

PRODICUS  
THE CHOICE OF HERCULES

*TRANSLATED FROM THE TEXT OF XENOPHON*

BY THE

REV. J. S. WATSON

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*WITH AN INTRODUCTION UPON*  
THE PHILOSOPHERS BEFORE SOCRATES





## INTRODUCTION

### THE PHILOSOPHERS BEFORE SOCRATES

GREEK natural philosophy began among the Ionians in Asia Minor. The Ionians were by nature materialists, lovers of the good things of life, and very naturally, therefore, their first philosophical speculations were upon the material or physical principle of the universe. This principle they denominated the "beginning" (*archē*), giving the word a causative significance, that is, the permanent as well as primal idea at the center of existence, of which all created things were manifestations in one form or another. To find this unifying idea in the phenomena of nature, both animate and inanimate, and to trace its origin, development, variations and transmutations in the objects about them became the study of a number of men, who, though writing in verse, as was the universal custom, are to be denominated philosophers or scientists rather than poets.

THALES, of Miletus, who flourished about B.C. 640, was the first of these ancient scientists, the Greeks calling him the Father of Philosophy. He declared water to be the basis of all things (see the opening line of Pindar's first Olympian ode in Volume III).

Following Thales came ANAXIMANDER, also of Miletus, who, by the hypothetical method that is fundamental to the science of to-day in its assumption of atoms and molecules and vortices as primary forms of matter, found the principle of the universe in the "unknowable" (*to apeiron*), a hypothetical substance without qualities, but out of which qualities arose, kindred yet antithetical, such as heat and coldness, moisture and dryness.

Another Milesian, ANAXIMENES, a younger contemporary of Anaximander, returned to the method of Thales, and found the first principle in a definite and known element, air, which he conceived as modified by various kinds and degrees of condensation and rarefaction into wind, clouds, fire, water

and earth. In this he, too, has been followed in part by the modern scientists, who have demonstrated that solids, liquids and gases are mere states of material substances and do not indicate essential differences, any one being convertible into the other two classes. DIOGENES OF APOLLONIA in Crete, a pupil of Anaximenes, followed his master in making air the primal substance, but carried his views farther, and regarded the universe as issuing from an intelligent principle. In this he may be called the first theistic philosopher. He wrote several books on Cosmogony.

By reasoning similar to that of Thales and Anaximenes, HERACLITUS, of Ephesus (B.C. 535-475), assumed the first principle to be ætherial fire, the substance forming the *empyrean* ("in fire"), the upper heaven. From this fire, he said, all things came, and to it they will all return, by never ceasing transmutation. The universe, therefore, is in a perpetual flux (*panta hrei*). There are modern scientists who hold to a similar conception, that is, that motion and its modes and not ponderable bodies and their qualities are the primary forms and manifestations of matter.

Dismissing these scientists or natural philosophers, we come to the first Greek philosopher proper, PYTHAGORAS, of Samos (B.C. 582-504). He coined the name "philosophy," a term meaning "the love of wisdom," and he aimed, not at knowledge for its own sake, but for its application to the moral and spiritual needs of mankind. It was this religious element that made him an object of profound veneration to the ancients. Secret brotherhoods were formed to study his doctrines and practise his precepts. The fundamental idea of the Pythagorean philosophy was *order*, as typified or incarnated in *number*. The master held that harmony of relation is the regulating principle of the universe. He first propounded the theory which modern science has demonstrated, that music is based on exact mathematical relations. In a very poetic way he connected another mathematical science, that of astronomy, with music, holding that each of the heavenly bodies in its definite motions could not but produce a specific and individual tone of sound, and that all these notes together formed a regular scale, or harmony, though mortal ears were too gross

to hear it. This theory of the "harmony of the spheres" has been frequently made use of by modern poets, such as Joseph Addison, who employs it in his paraphrase of one of the Psalms, beginning, "The spacious firmament on high."

Pythagoras also connected ethics with mathematics, or numerical relation, holding that happiness consisted in perfection of all the virtues, deficiency in any producing discord in the soul as a whole. Therefore he taught restraint of evil passions, and cultivation of good qualities of the mind and the finer impulses of the heart. To be like the Deity he thought the chief end of man. Unlike Homer, he conceived of the gods not as creatures of human passions, but as pure existences who are the guardians of men. In this he became the pattern for all subsequent Greek philosophers, and through them, prepared the way for Christianity. He also held to the doctrine of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls, probably receiving it from the Orient through Egypt, although tradition says he learned it from his teacher, PHERECYDES (600-550 B.C.). This doctrine taught that souls, by the purifying process of right thinking and acting, were rewarded by a return to earth in the persons of noble men, and in time rose to a higher than human plane of existence, and that souls giving up to evil thoughts and sensual practises were punished by rebirth in the shape of animals typical of their bad characteristics, to be cured of their weakness, and, if found incurable, to be cast into Tartarus for a more terrible expiration. The followers of Pythagoras were noted as men of pure life, fraternal feeling and the highest patriotism.

Pythagoras left no writings. PHILOLAUS, however, a distinguished Pythagorean philosopher of Lower Italy in the time of Socrates, composed a work on his master's philosophy. Plato is said to have paid a generous price for the manuscript to aid its author, who was in dire poverty, and to have made copious use of it in his *Timæus*.

HERMOTIMUS, of Clazomenæ, was an early philosopher who like Pythagoras studied the nature of the soul. He was said to have acquired such occult power that his soul could leave his body, and bring him tidings of distant events with wonderful speed. Pliny humorously records that Hermoti-

mus's enemies (more probably those friends he had wearied with his marvellous stories) took advantage of this absence to burn the body, thus putting an end to the philosopher and his magical wanderings.

The Greek colonists in Lower Italy were especially affected by Pythagorean doctrines, and thereafter they were prone to philosophical speculation. At Elea arose the school of so-called Eleatic philosophers. This was founded by XENOPHANES, of Colophon, who was born about 570 B.C. He was the first pantheist among the Greeks, teaching that God was the eternal unity permeating the universe, governing it by his thought.

The following is a translation by Professor W. C. Lawton of one of the fragments of Xenophanes:

Still men hold the belief that the gods were born and begotten,  
Wear such garb as themselves, and have like bodies, and voices, . . .  
Yet it is certain, if hands were bestowed upon oxen or lions,  
If with their hands they could draw, and the works of men should  
    accomplish,—  
Horses like unto horses, and oxen in likeness of oxen,  
So would they draw their figures of gods, and fashion the bodies  
Like in every way to their own!

The great disciple of Xenophanes, PARMENIDES, of Elea (born 511 B.C.), amplified this doctrine, declaring that God was the only reality, the visible world with its myriad changing forms being appearance without reality. In this he anticipated the idealism of Bishop Berkeley, the English philosopher, and Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science. He formulated his philosophy in a didactic poem entitled *On Nature*. A disciple of Parmenides, ZENO OF ELEA (born B.C. 488), devoted his energies to explain and develop the theories of his master. He was a patriot, dying, it is said, in an attempt to expel a tyrant from his native country.

EMPEDOCLES, of Agrigentum in Sicily, (born 492 B.C.), accepted the Eleatic doctrine of the unchangeable essence of substance, and yet held with the early Ionians that there were material elements; these he said were four in number, earth, water, air, and fire. Of these the world is built up by two opposing energies, love as the cause of union, hate as the



cause of separation. Here we have the source of the modern scientific ideas of attraction and repulsion. Lucretius, the Roman philosopher, followed his teachings, which were extant among the ancients, chiefly in two books: *On Nature*, and *Purifications*. The latter work recommended virtuous conduct as a cure for disease. He was probably the author also of the *Golden Verses of Pythagoras*, fragments of which have been preserved to the present day. He was accredited with marvellous powers, such as the restoration of the dead. According to legend, he was not averse to being thought a supernatural being, so that, when death approached, he threw himself into the crater of *Ætna*, in order that his mysterious disappearance might make the people revere him as a god; but the secret was discovered by the volcano disgorging one of his brazen sandals in a subsequent eruption.

The following fragment of Empedocles, translated by Professor W. C. Lawton, illustrates Empedocles's belief in metempsychosis:

There is a doom of fate, an ancient decree of immortals,  
Never to be unmade, by amplest pledges attested:  
That, if a spirit divine, who shares in the life everlasting,  
Through transgression defiles his glorious body by bloodshed,  
Or if he perjure himself by swearing unto a falsehood,  
Thrice ten thousand seasons he wanders apart from the Blessed,  
Passing from birth unto birth through every species of mortal;  
Changing ever the paths of life, yet ever unresting:  
Even as I now roam, from gods far-wandered, an exile,  
Yielding to maddening strife.

Once already have I as a youth been born, as a maiden,  
Bush, and winged bird, and silent fish in the waters. . . .  
After what honours, and after how long and blissful existence,  
Thus am I wretchedly doomed to abide in the meadows of mortals!  
Loudly I wept and wailed at beholding the place unfamiliar. . . .

ANAXAGORAS OF CLAZOMENÆ (born B.C. 500) accepted the philosophy of Empedocles, emphasizing divine reason as the guiding spirit of the universe. He established philosophy at Athens, where it reached its highest development and which for a thousand years to come was to be its seat and center.

LEUCIPPUS, who flourished about 500 B.C., first propounded the so-called atomic theory. This was developed by his pupil,



DEMOCRITUS, of Abdera (born 494 B.C.). The theory declares that the universe is composed of atoms, undivisible bodies (whence the name), imperishable, and too minute to be detected by the senses, alike in substance but unlike in shape, which, falling through the infinite void, collide and unite, and so form the material objects of nature, these differing in appearance according to the variety, in number, size, shape, and arrangement, of the atoms that compose them. This theory was adopted by the Roman poet and philosopher, Lucretius. Democritus was known as the Laughing Philosopher; and the happy disposition indicated by this name may have been the cause of his reaching the ripe age of one hundred years, with his faculties unimpaired to the last. It was from Democritus that Epicurus derived his philosophy.

All these doctrines of the early philosophers were propagated by a class of professional teachers, called SOPHISTS (wise men), who went about over Greece imparting their knowledge to whomsoever would pay them. They also gave instruction in the art of public speaking, in which they became facile in making "the worse appear the better reason." This insincerity was due largely to their driving the Eleatic philosophy, which denied objective reality of the world of sense, to its logical conclusion, namely, that truth is only seeming, and therefore we have no other standard of action than utility for the individual. Accordingly they gave all their attention to winning an argument rather than to discovering the truth, and gave no place to moral instruction. Indeed, some of them started from the position that knowledge and virtue were only subjective notions and therefore changing with times and occasions. Thus in time, owing chiefly to attacks upon them by Socrates and Plato, the Sophists were discredited, the name sophistry becoming synonymous with insincere reasoning.

PROTAGORAS, of Abdera in Thrace (B.C. 480-411) was the first philosopher who called himself a Sophist, and who taught for pay. He drew up a code of laws for the Athenian colonists of Thurii in Lower Italy. He probably accompanied the colony, for we hear of him in Sicily, where he acquired great repute. Returning with many pupils to Athens, he became the most popular teacher in the city, and made, says Plato,

more money than Phidias and ten other sculptors. Probably through jealousy he was accused of impiety, the impeachment being founded on his book on the gods, which began with the statement: "Respecting the gods, I am unable to know whether they exist, or do not exist." He was banished from Athens according to one account, though another states that his book was burned, and that he was allowed to remain in the city. He may be called the first Agnostic, since his philosophy was based on the impossibility of attaining any absolute criterion of truth. His motto, "Man is the measure of all things," implied that every man must be his own final authority, for just as each thing appears to any individual, so it really is for him.

Protagoras wrote many works, the chief being *Truth and On the Gods*. Plato refuted the philosophy of the first in his *Theætetus*. He also described in vivid fashion the teachings of the philosopher in his dialogue entitled *Protagoras*. Protagoras was also a famous rhetorician, literary critic, and grammarian. He was the first to distinguish genders in nouns and moods in verbs.

GORGIAS OF LEONTINI, a Sicilian, who was a contemporary of Protagoras who modestly disclaimed the title of Sophist, accepting in its stead that of rhetorician. He was a finished orator and most successful teacher. In B.C. 427, when advanced in years, he came to Athens to implore aid for his native city against Syracuse. He was successful in his mission, and, pleased with the generosity and culture of the Attic capital, he later took up his residence there. He travelled much through Greece achieving great popularity and riches by his teaching. He died in Larissa in Thessaly in his hundred and fifth year.

Gorgias was known as "the Nihilist" from his philosophy, which may be summed up in three propositions: (1) Nothing (*nihil*) exists; (2) If anything existed it could not be known; (3) If anything did exist, and could be known, it could not be communicated. There remain two works ascribed to him, but which are not genuine, the *Apology of Palamedes*, and the *Encomium on Helen*. Plato wrote a dialogue on rhetoric which he called *Gorgias*.

HIPPIAS, a Greek Sophist of Elis, of the time of Protagoras, was a man of prodigious memory and vast learning. He was the first to compose dialogues, the literary form which Plato took up and perfected. Plato wrote two dialogues, *Hippias Major* and *Hippias Minor*, in which he represented the Sophist as very vain and arrogant.

PRODICUS, of Ceos, another contemporary of Protagoras, came a number of times to Athens as ambassador from his native country, and his speeches were received with such flattering applause that he settled in the city as a teacher of rhetoric. A fable of his, *The Choice of Hercules*, became a literary classic. Xenophon has preserved its substance in his *Memorabilia*, and this is presented in the following pages in the translation of the Rev. J. S. Watson.

## PRODICUS

### THE CHOICE OF HERCULES

[FROM XENOPHON'S MEMORABILIA OF SOCRATES]

PRODICUS the sophist, also, in his narrative concerning Hercules, which indeed he declaims to most people as a specimen of his ability, expresses a similar notion respecting virtue, speaking, as far as I remember, to the following effect: For he says that Hercules, when he was advancing from boyhood to manhood, a period at which the young, becoming their own masters, begin to give intimations whether they will enter on life by the path of virtue or that of vice, went forth into a solitary place, and sat down, perplexed as to which of these two paths he should pursue; and that two female figures, of lofty stature, seemed to advance towards him, the one of an engaging and graceful mien, gifted by nature with elegance of form, modesty of look, and sobriety of demeanour, and clad in a white robe; the other fed to plumpness and softness, but assisted by art both in her complexion, so as to seem fairer and rosier than she really was, and in her gesture, so as to seem taller than her natural height; she had her eyes wide open, and a robe through which her beauty would readily show itself; she frequently contemplated her figure, and looked about to see if any one else was observing her; and she frequently glanced back at her own shadow. As they approached nearer to Hercules, she, whom I first described, came forward at the same pace, but the other, eager to get before her, ran up to Hercules, and exclaimed, "I see that you are hesitating, Hercules, by what path you shall enter upon life; if, then, you make a friend of me, I will conduct you by the most delightful and easy road, and you shall taste of every species of pleasure, and lead a life free from every sort of trouble. In the first place, you shall take no thought of wars or state affairs, but shall pass your time

considering what meat or drink you may find to gratify your appetite, what you may delight yourself by seeing or hearing, what you may be pleased with smelling or touching, with what object of affection you may have most pleasure in associating, how you may sleep most softly, and how you may secure all these enjoyments with the least degree of trouble. If an apprehension of want means, by which such delights may be obtained, should ever arise in you, there is no fear that I shall urge you to procure them by toil or suffering either of body or mind; but you shall enjoy what others acquire by labour, abstaining from nothing by which it may be possible to profit, for I give my followers liberty to benefit themselves from any source whatever."

Hercules, on hearing this address, said, "And what, O woman, is your name?" "My friends," she replied, "call me Happiness, but those who hate me, give me, to my disparagement, the name of Vice."

In the mean time the other female approached, and said, "I also am come to address you, Hercules, because I know your parents, and have observed your disposition in the training of your childhood, from which I entertain hopes, that if you direct your steps along the path that leads to my dwelling, you will become an excellent performer of whatever is honourable and noble, and that I shall appear more honourable and attractive through your illustrious deeds. I will not deceive you, however, with promises of pleasure, but will set before you things as they really are, and as the gods have appointed them; for of what is valuable and excellent, the gods grant nothing to mankind without labour and care; and if you wish the gods, therefore, to be propitious to you, you must worship the gods; if you seek to be beloved by your friends, you must serve your friends; if you desire to be honoured by any city, you must benefit that city; if you long to be admired by all Greece for your merit, you must endeavour to be of advantage to all Greece; if you are anxious that the earth should yield you abundance of fruit, you must cultivate the earth; if you think that you should enrich yourself from herds of cattle, you must bestow care upon herds of cattle; if you are eager to increase your means by war, and



to secure freedom to your friends and subdue your enemies, you must learn the arts of war, and learn them from such as understand them, and practice how to use them with advantage; or if you wish to be vigorous in body, you must accustom your body to obey your mind, and exercise it with toil and exertion."

Here Vice, interrupting her speech, said, (as Prodicus relates,) "Do you see, Hercules, by how difficult and tedious road this woman conducts you to gratification, while I shall lead you, by an easy and short path, to perfect happiness?"

"Wretched being," rejoined Virtue, "of what good are you in possession? Or what real pleasure do you experience, when you are unwilling to do anything for the attainment of it? You, who do not even wait for the natural desire of gratification, but fill yourself with all manner of dainties before you have an appetite for them, eating before you are hungry, drinking before you are thirsty, procuring cooks that you may eat with pleasure, buying costly wines that you may drink with pleasure, and running about seeking for snow [to cool wine] in summer; while, in order to sleep with pleasure, you prepare not only soft beds, but couches, and rockers under your couches, for you do not desire sleep in consequence of labour, but in consequence of having nothing to do; you force the sensual inclinations before they require gratification, using every species of contrivance for the purpose, and abusing male and female; for thus it is that you treat your friends, insulting their modesty at night, and making them sleep away the most useful part of their day. Though you are one of the immortals, you are cast out from the society of the gods, and despised by the good among mankind; the sweetest of all sounds, the praises of yourself, you have never heard, nor have you ever seen the most pleasing of all sights, for you have never beheld one meritorious work of your own hand. Who would believe you when you give your word for anything? Or who would assist you when in need of anything? Or who, that has proper feeling, would venture to join your company of revellers? for while they are young they grow impotent in body, and when they are older they are impotent in mind; they live without labour, and in fatness, through

their youth, and pass laboriously, and in wretchedness, through old age; ashamed of what they have done, oppressed with what they have to do, having run through their pleasures in early years, and laid up afflictions for the close of life. But I am the companion of the gods; I associate with virtuous men; no honourable deed, divine or human, is done without me; I am honoured, most of all, by the deities, and by those among men to whom it belongs to honour me, being a welcome co-operator with artisans, a faithful household guardian to masters, a benevolent assistant to servants, a benign promoter of the labours of peace, a constant auxiliary to the efforts of war, an excellent sharer in friendship. My friends have a sweet and untroubled enjoyment of meat and drink, for they refrain from them till they feel an appetite. They have also sweeter sleep than the idle; and are neither annoyed if they lose a portion of it, nor neglect to do their duties for the sake of it. The young are pleased with praises from the old; the old are delighted with honours from the young. They remember their former acts with pleasure, and rejoice to perform their present occupations with success; being, through my influence, dear to the gods, beloved by their friends, and honoured by their country. And when the destined end of life comes, they do not lie in oblivion and dishonour, but, celebrated with songs of praise, flourish for ever in the memory of mankind. By such a course of conduct, O Hercules, son of noble parents, you may secure the most exalted happiness."

Nearly thus it was that Prodicus related the instruction of Hercules by Virtue; adorning the sentiments, however, with far more magnificent language than that in which I now give them. It becomes you, therefore, Aristippus, reflecting on these admonitions, to endeavour to think of what concerns the future period of your life.

# THE APOLOGY OF SOCRATES

BY PLATO

*TRANSLATED BY*

BENJAMIN JOWETT

MASTER OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

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*WITH AN INTRODUCTION UPON*  
SOCRATES AND HIS DISCIPLES

AND A

LIFE OF PLATO

BY CLIFTON W. COLLINS, M.A.

EAGLE! WHY SOAREST THOU ABOVE THAT TOMB,—  
TO WHAT SUBLIME AND STAR-Y-PAVEN HOME  
FLOATEST THOU?

I AM THE IMAGE OF GREAT PLATO'S SPIRIT,  
ASCENDING HEAVEN; ATHENS DOTH INHERIT  
HIS CORPSE BELOW.

— *Greek Epitaph, translated by* SHELLEY.

## INTRODUCTIONS

### SOCRATES AND HIS DISCIPLES

A NEW school of philosophy arose with SOCRATES, the most influential thinker of the Greek world. This remarkable man was born near Athens B.C. 469, the son of a sculptor and a midwife. To his mother's occupation he was wont to refer humorously in defining his own occupation as bringing ideas to birth. From his father he inherited a love for physical beauty, and he delighted to have well-formed youths about him; this gave rise in later times to the unfounded charge against him of immorality. (Compare the introduction to Sappho, in Volume III.)

Socrates, though of hardy physique (he went barefoot all the year round, even as a soldier in the cold climate of Thrace) was noted for his ugly features, his flat nose, his thick lips, and his bulging eyes, giving him the look of a satyr. There is a pen picture of him in Plato's Symposium, in which Alcibiades is represented as comparing Socrates to his face to one of the masks of Silenus (the drunken satyr who was Dionysus's companion) "which may be seen sitting in the statuaries' shops . . . made to open in the middle revealing images of the gods within,"—by which figure Alcibiades conveyed the idea of the divine beauty of Socrates's mind within its ugly physical mask.

In the prime of manhood Socrates served as a heavy-armed soldier, winning renown for bravery as well as hardihood. He saved the life of Alcibiades, who afterward became his pupil, at the battle of Potidæa. In civilian life, he exhibited bravery of a higher order, when, as a member of the Five Hundred he had the moral courage, in spite of personal risk, to call for a vote on an unconstitutional question, and when he refused to obey the order of the Thirty Tyrants to arrest a patriot. His record as a husband and a father was not so excellent, however. From middle life onward he neglected all



means of livelihood, devoting himself wholly to teaching for no recompense save what his disciples chose to give him. He never opened a school, nor gave public lectures, but frequented the market-places, gymnasiums, and workshops, talking with men of every age and degree, seeking to inspire in them a desire for mental and moral culture—to lay aside conventional acceptance of beliefs and to find out real truths for themselves, and then to act upon them. In so doing he incurred the scorn of those who thought themselves the arbiters of culture, and the hatred of those whose standing in society and whose business interests were based on meek acceptance of their importance by the public. At first he was attacked only by ridicule. Aristophanes, the comic dramatist, put Socrates's familiar figure, itself an occasion of laughter, on the stage in *The Clouds*, as a wool-gathering, nonsense-spinning philosopher. [See Volume VII.]

Later, the politicians and public orators (the lawyers of that day), whose power and influence had been undermined by Socrates teaching people to think and act for themselves, formed a conspiracy to suppress the disturber of the "pillars of society," and impeached him with corrupting the Athenian youth, and of despising the tutelary deities of the State, substituting new divinities. There is no need here of going into the details of the charge, nor of the conduct of the trial, for all these matters are set forth in the following pages in the *Apology of Socrates*, the defence of the accused, which Plato, his chief disciple, afterward wrote out with an evident attempt to report the exact words of his master. So, too, the reader will find an account of the death of Socrates in the succeeding dialogue by Plato, entitled *Phædo*. Suffice it to say that he was condemned to death, and, scorning to take advantage of means of escape offered him, he obeyed the decree by drinking the poison of the hemlock, dying B.C. 399, in his seventieth year.

His death was followed by a revulsion of feeling on the part of the public, who pursued those instrumental in his conviction with punishment, including exile and even death.

Socrates was devoutly convinced that it was his mission in life to start men upon the right road to attain truth. He

believed that at times a divine sign was given him to guide him in his actions. This he called his *daemon* (spirit), and stated that its method of communication was by a prophetic or supernatural voice. He was the first philosopher to turn the attention of men to analyzing their mental and moral natures, and in this was the founder of Psychology and Ethics. And in this art of self-examination he naturally developed method in reasoning, or Dialectics, the foundation of formal Logic, which was later expanded by Plato, and systematized by Aristotle.

The flower of Athenian youth were numbered among the pupils of Socrates. Some of them fell away from his teachings, as CRITIAS, a distinguished orator, dramatist, and elegiac poet, who became the most ruthless of the Thirty Tyrants, and the brilliant debauchee ALCIBIADES, who, led by ambition, became the Benedict Arnold of his country, being by turns a patriot general and a renegade.

Of the faithful disciples the greatest was Plato, whose life is hereinafter given. XENOPHON, the historian, who is also discussed later, was another disciple who wrote recollections of the master. EUCLID OF MEGARA, self-taught by the writings of Parmenides, hearing of the fame of Socrates, came to Athens, which was twenty miles away, to receive his instruction. When, in consequence of enmity arising between Athens and Megara, a decree was passed by the Athenians that any citizen of Megara found in Athens should forfeit his life, Euclid came to see Socrates by night concealed in a woman's cloak and veil. But the pupil was fond of forensic controversy, which the master despised, and Euclid established a school of his own in Megara, the chief purpose of which was to teach public disputation. In argument he was averse to reasoning from analogy, preferring the logical method now accepted in legal procedure, of deducing fair conclusions from acknowledged premises. He taught that there is one supreme good (known in its various aspects as Intelligence, Providence, God), which he defined as "that which is always the same," and held that evil, as an active principle in opposition to good, though not the sense of deficiency of goodness, has no existence. In this doctrine, which

he derived from Parmenides, he considered good as abstractly residing in God, and concrete examples of goodness deriving the quality therefrom. Socrates sought for no such warrant for goodness or truth, accepting good as its own credentials. The same difference of philosophy exists to-day, theologians of the school of Calvin, and legal philosophers of the school of Blackstone maintaining that a thing is good because it is of God, as opposed to the contention of the rationalistic theologians and the philosophers of the natural order, such as Jefferson, that a thing is good solely because of its appeal to the sense of goodness in the human mind—that even God is God because of his goodness.

It must not be supposed, however, that Euclid was fond of metaphysical discussions of the nature of Deity. Indeed, he is reported to have answered a query concerning the gods with the dry remark: "I know nothing more of them than this: they hate inquisitive persons." Another anecdote reveals him as a philosopher of the great school of Love, of which Jesus thereafter became the master. His brother became angry with him, and said: "Let me perish if I be not revenged on you." Euclid answered: "And let *me* perish, if I do not subdue your resentment by forbearance, and make you love me as much as ever."

ANTISTHENES. was another disciple of Socrates who founded a school of philosophy of his own. He developed the practical teaching of the master, that the end of philosophy was to attain a moral and tranquil life, to the extreme of utter simplicity in living. The highest good, he held, was that virtue which spurns every enjoyment. He also advocated absolute frankness in speech. His followers never bathed, wore filthy clothing, and treated all who approached them with insulting rudeness. Hence they were called *Cynici*, "dog-like." The most famous of them, DIOGENES OF SINOPE, was proud of his appellation, "Diogenes the Dog," saying, however, that he did not, like other dogs, bite his enemies, but his friends, and that for their own good.

It is said that Diogenes, who was the son of a convicted counterfeiter, and himself believed to be his father's accomplice, went boldly to Antisthenes and asked to become his

pupil. Antisthenes refused, and, on Oïgenes persisting, struck him with a stick, whereupon the applicant said: "Strike me, Antisthenes, but you will never find a stick stout enough to drive me away while you speak anything worth hearing." The philosopher was so much pleased with this spirited reply that he admitted Diogenes among his pupils. The intrepid disciple practised the philosophy of the master in a way that even Antisthenes had not dreamed of. He determined to distinguish himself by his contempt of the refinements and even the comforts of life. Dressed in a coarse cloak, and carrying wallet and staff, he frequented public places and railed against luxury. He subsisted on casual charity, and, for a time, slept in a large earthen vessel (or tub) in the hall of public records. He is said to have carried a lantern about with him by day, as well as night, poking it into the faces of those who inquired its purpose, and saying, "I am searching for an honest man." This tub and lantern became identified with him, and are mentioned in anecdotes in which it is impossible for them to have played any part. Diogenes was also a tramp, roaming from place to place, and scattering his invectives over Greece. In his old age, sailing to Ægina, he was taken by pirates and carried to Crete, where he was exposed for sale in the market-place. When the auctioneer asked him what he could do, he replied: "I can govern men; sell me to one who wants a master." A Corinthian merchant passing by heard the remark, and, struck by its singularity, purchased Diogenes, and took him to Corinth. Here he gave him his freedom and made him instructor of his children and manager of his household, in which capacities Diogenes gave such good service that the merchant used to say that the gods had sent a good genius to his house. Plutarch relates an apocryphal story, which would more plausibly apply to Diogenes in Athens, that, while Diogenes was at Corinth, Alexander the Great came to the city, and hearing of the unique "character" it possessed, hunted up the cynic. He found him sitting at the mouth of his tub (!) in the sun. "I am Alexander the Great," said the monarch. "And I am Diogenes the Dog," said the cynic. "I should like to render you a service," said Alexander; "what can I do for you?" "Stand out of my sunshine," answered



Diogenes. Alexander, pleased with the refreshing bluntness of the reply, turned to his courtiers, and hushed their contemptuous ridicule of the philosopher by saying: "If I were not Alexander, I should wish to be Diogenes."

Diogenes died in Corinth in his ninetieth year. A marble column, terminating in the figure of a dog, was raised over his tomb. His native place, Sinope, honored his memory by erecting brazen statues of the philosopher.

In the second century, B.C., DEMONAX, of Cyprus, took Diogenes for his model, and won a similar renown. He went to Athens, where he became very popular, especially with the children, who brought him great quantities of fruit. He spoke his mind boldly upon all subjects, even denouncing the sacred Eleusinian Mysteries: "If they are bad, no one should be initiated; and if they are good they ought to be open to every one." He was a friend of Epictetus, to whom he retorted, when the Stoic philosopher rebuked him for not marrying, "Very well; give me one of your daughters for a wife."—Now Epictetus was also a bachelor.

Lucian of Samosata has preserved a number of anecdotes of Demonax. Perhaps the best are these: A certain sophist from Sidon, very fond of praising himself, was boasting that he understood all systems of philosophy. "If Aristotle calls me to the Lyceum, I can follow him: if Plato invites me to the Academy, I will meet him there: if Zeno to the Porch, I am ready: if Pythagoras calls upon me, I can be silent." Rising up quietly among the audience—"Hark!" said Demonax, addressing him—"Pythagoras calls you." When a neighbour asked Demonax to accompany him to the temple of Æsculapius to pray for the recovery of his son, the philosopher replied—"Do you suppose that the god is deaf, that he cannot hear us where we are?"

Other prominent Cynics were CRATES OF THEBES (B.C. 320), a pupil of Diogenes; HIPPARCHIA and her brother METROCLES; MONIMUS, of Syracuse; and MENIPPUS, of Gadara, in Syria (B.C. 250). Menippus was originally a slave. His writings (now completely lost) were a medley of verse and prose, treating of the follies of mankind, especially of philosophers, in a sarcastic tone; they became models for the



satirical works of Lucian, and for those of the Roman writer Varro, which were hence called Menippean Satires.

Cynicism was represented at Rome, from Nero's time to Domitian's by DEMETRIUS, the friend of Seneca, and in the time of Hadrian by ENOMAUS of Gadara. Ultimately, it merged into Stoicism at Rome.

In the reign of the Antonines PEREGRINUS PROTEUS, of Parium, was a noted Cynic. He was an apostate from Christianity, and travelled about from place to place seeking notoriety, finally burning himself to death in public at the Olympic Games (A.D. 165), as described by Lucian, who was present at the spectacle.

The last of the Cynics was SALUSTIUS OF EMESA in Syria, who flourished in the latter part of the fifth century, A.D. He was an atheist, and was especially severe in his attacks upon the fantastic theology of the Neo-Platonists.

ARISTIPPUS, of Cyrene, another pupil of Socrates, travelled about through Greece after the master's death, teaching for money. He was the founder of the Cyrenaic School, or the system of Hedonism (from *hēdonē*, pleasure). He taught that the only things real and true are our sensations, and not the external objects that produce them; and that therefore pleasure, which resides in these sensations, was the aim of life, virtue being desirable only so far as it ministers to our pleasures, which differ, not in kind, but in duration and degree. He opposed sensuality, however, saying that government of the desires led to the highest enjoyment, and that mental training was essential to this government. Logically this philosophy implied that nothing was just or unjust by nature,—only by custom and law, and it led to the view that the wise man will enjoy the present hour regardless of moral considerations, or the thought of punishment after death. Finally this school was merged into Epicureanism, which taught the doctrine of pleasure in a more philosophical form. HEGESIAS (B.C. 340) developed the Cyrenaic teaching in a curious way, saying that pure pleasure, the only good of life, was unattainable in this world, and therefore that the true philosopher would seek for it in the next by killing himself.

CEBES OF THEBES was a disciple of Socrates, who did

not pervert his master's teaching. He composed three dialogues: *Hebdome*, *Phrynichus*, and *Pinax* (the Picture), the last being the only one which has come down to us. It is a moral sketch or picture of life, written in pleasing style. During the Middle Ages it became extremely popular, being translated even into the Arabic (in the ninth century, AD.).

SIMMIAS, also of Thebes, was first the disciple of the Pythagorean philosopher Philolaüs, and afterwards of Socrates, at whose death he was present. He wrote twenty-three dialogues on philosophical subjects, all of which are lost.

CRITON, of Athens, the wealthy disciple whose arrangements for the escape of Socrates from prison were foiled by the philosopher's determination to abide by the law, was also the author of philosophical dialogues (seventeen in number), which are now lost. A dialogue of Plato bears his name.

PHÆDO, after whom Plato's dialogue upon the last hours of Socrates was named, was a high-born youth of Elis, who was taken prisoner about 400 B.C., brought to Athens, and sold as a slave. He ran away from his master to Socrates, and was ransomed by one of the philosopher's followers. Some time after the death of Socrates he returned to Elis and founded a school of philosophy. He was succeeded by PLISTANUS, after whom the school became merged in that at Eretria.

ÆSCHINES (not the orator), a pupil of Socrates, became a perfumer in Athens after the master's death, but, not succeeding at the trade, went to Sicily, and stayed at the court of Dionysius, until that tyrant was expelled. Returning to Athens he taught philosophy in private for a fee. He wrote orations, epistles, and Socratic dialogues on temperance and other virtues, pretending to have received the dialogues from Xanthippe, the wife of Socrates. None of these dialogues remain, although three dialogues falsely ascribed to him are extant. They treat of Virtue, Riches, and Death.

# LIFE OF PLATO

BY CLIFTON W. COLLINS, M.A.

PLATO was born at Ægina in B.C. 430—the same year that Pericles died—of a noble family which traced its descent from Codrus, the last hero-king of Attica. Little is told us of his early years beyond some stories of the divinity which hedged him in his childhood, and a dream of Socrates,<sup>1</sup> in which he saw a cygnet fly towards him, nestle in his breast, and then spread its wings and soar upwards, singing most sweetly. The next morning Ariston appeared, leading his son Plato to the philosopher, and Socrates knew that his dream was fulfilled.

It is easy to fill in the meagre outlines of the biography as given us by Diogenes Laertius; for Plato lived in a momentous time, when Athens could not afford to let any of her sons stand aloof from military service, and when every citizen must have been more or less an actor in the history of his times. Plato of course underwent the usual training of an Athenian gentleman, such as he has sketched it himself in the "Protagoras;" first attending the grammar school, where he learnt his letters and committed to memory long passages from the poets, which he was taught to repeat with proper emphasis and modulation; and the frequent quotations from Homer in his Dialogues prove how thoroughly this part of his mental training was carried out.<sup>2</sup> Then he was transferred to the Master who was

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<sup>1</sup> Athenæus tells us of another dream, by no means so complimentary to Plato, in which his spirit appeared to Socrates in the form of a crow, which planted its claws firmly in the bald head of the philosopher, and flapped its wings. The interpretation of this dream, according to Socrates (or Athenæus), was, that Plato would tell many lies about him.

<sup>2</sup> Several pieces of poetry bearing Plato's name have come down to us; and there is a graceful epitaph on "Stella," ascribed to him, which Shelley has thus translated:—

Thou wert the morning star among the living,  
Till thy fair light had fled;  
Now having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving  
New splendour to the dead.

to infuse harmony and rhythm into his soul by means of the lyre and vocal music. Then he learned mathematics, for which subject he showed a special aptitude; and we hear of him wrestling in the palæstra, where his breadth of shoulders stood him in good stead, and winning prizes at the Isthmian games. He also found time to study "the old masters" of philosophy, and (as might be expected) the two whose works attracted him the most were Heraclitus and Pythagoras. The melancholy of the one, and the mysticism of the other, found an echo in his own thoughts.

He was fifteen at the time of the expedition to Sicily, which broke the peace with Sparta, and led in three years to the threatened annihilation of Athens. The Athenians, with the energy of despair, made a prodigious effort to recover the empire of the seas, which was passing from their hands. They melted down their treasures; they used the reserve fund which Pericles had stored up for such an emergency; and within thirty days they had equipped a fresh fleet of over a hundred sail. Then followed a general levy of the citizens; every man who could bear arms was pressed into the service; freedom was promised to any slave who would volunteer; and even the Knights (of whom Plato was one) forgot the dignity of their order, hung up their bridles in the Acropolis, and went on board the fleet as marines. There is no reason to suppose that Plato shunned his duty at such a crisis; and we may therefore conclude that he volunteered with the rest, served with the squadron which relieved Mitylene, and was present at the victory of Arginusæ shortly afterwards.

Soon Alcibiades was recalled, and his genius gave a different character to the war; but the success of the Athenians was only temporary. Lysander came upon the scene; and on the fatal shore of Ægos-Potami the Athenian fleet was destroyed—almost without a blow being struck. Then followed the blockade of Athens, the consequent famine, and the despair of the citizens, with the foe without and two rival factions within, till at last the city surrendered, and the long walls were pulled down to the sound of Spartan music.

We have no clue, beyond a casual reference in Xenophon, as to what part Plato took in subsequent events. His own



tastes and sympathies lay with the few; and all his intimate friends were among the oligarchs (the "good men and true," as they termed themselves), who, by a *coup d'état*, effected what is known as the Revolution of the Four Hundred. A section of these formed the execrated Thirty Tyrants. Critias, the master-spirit of this body, was Plato's uncle, and probably had considerable influence over him. But be this as it may, we find Plato attracted by the programme in which the oligarchs pledged themselves to reform abuses and to purge the state of evil-doers; and for a time, at all events, he was an avowed partisan of the Thirty. But they soon threw off the mask, and a Reign of Terror followed, which made their name for ever a byword among the Athenians. Plato was probably in the first instance disgusted by the jealous intolerance of this new party, which drove the aged Protagoras into exile, and proscribed philosophical lectures; but when this intolerance was followed by numerous assassinations, he was utterly horrified, and at once withdrew from public life, and from all connection with his former friends.

The next twelve years must have been the period of Plato's greatest intimacy with Socrates; and he was the great philosopher's constant companion until the day of his death. He had now no ties to bind him to Athens—perhaps, indeed, he did not feel secure there—and he went to live at Megara with his friend Euclid [the philosopher, not the geometrician]. Then he set out upon those travels of which we hear so much and know so little; "and" (says Valerius Maximus) "whilst studious youth were crowding to Athens from every quarter in search of Plato for their master, that philosopher was wandering along the banks of Nile or the vast plains of a barbarous country, himself a disciple of the old men of Egypt." After storing his mind with the wisdom of the Egyptians, Plato is said to have gone on to Palestine and Phœnicia—to have reached China disguised as an oil merchant—to have had the "Unknown God" revealed to him by Jewish rabbis—and to have learned the secrets of the stars from Chaldean astronomers. But these extended travels are probably a fiction.

His visit to Sicily, however, rests on better evidence. He made a journey thither in the year 387 B.C., with the object of



witnessing an eruption of Mount Etna—already fatal to one philosopher, Empedocles. On his way he stayed at Tarentum with his friend Archytas, the great mathematician, and a member of the Pythagorean brotherhood. This order—which, like the Jesuits, was exclusive, ascetic, and ambitious—had formerly had its representatives in every city of Magna Græcia, and had influenced their political history accordingly. Even then their traditions and mystic ritual, as well as the ability shown by individual members, daily attracted new converts. Among these was Dion, the young brother-in-law of Dionysius, Tyrant of Syracuse. Dion was introduced by the Pythagoreans to Plato, and their acquaintance soon warmed into a friendship which has become historical. There was much on both sides that was attractive. In Plato, Dion found the friend who never flattered, the teacher who never dogmatised, the companion who was never wearisome. The gracious eloquence, the charm of manner, the knowledge of life, and, above all, the generous and noble thoughts so frankly expressed by Plato, must have had the same effect upon him as the conversation of Socrates had upon Alcibiades. His heart was touched, his enthusiasm was kindled, and he became a new man. There dawned upon him the conception of another Syracuse,—freed from slavery, and from the oppressive presence of foreign guards—self-governed, and with contented and industrious citizens—and Dion himself, the author of her liberties and the founder of her laws, idolised by a grateful people.

These day-dreams had a strong effect on Dion; and Plato partly shared in his enthusiasm. As in his own model Republic, all might be accomplished “if philosophers were kings.” Even as things were, if Dionysius would but look with a favourable eye upon Plato and his teaching, much might be done in the way of easing the yoke of tyranny which pressed so heavily upon the wretched Syracusans.

Accordingly, Plato visited Syracuse in company with Dion, and was formally presented at court. But the results were unsatisfactory. It was not, indeed, likely that the philosopher, who was the sworn foe of Tyranny in the abstract, and who looked upon the Tyrant as the incarnation of all that was evil

in human nature, would, either by flattery or plain speaking, convince Dionysius of the error of his ways. Plato had several interviews with Dionysius; and we are told that he enlarged upon his favourite doctrine of the happiness of the virtuous and the inevitable misery of the wicked, till all who heard him were charmed by his eloquence, except the despot himself, who in a rage ordered him to be taken down to the market-place there and then, and to be sold as a slave to the highest bidder; that so he might put his own philosophy to a practical test, and judge for himself if the virtuous man was still happy in chains or in prison. Plato was accordingly sold, and was "bought in" by his friends for twenty minæ. Another account is, that he was put on board a trireme and landed at Ægina on the way home, where he was sold, and bought by a generous stranger, who set him at liberty and restored him to Athens. In any case, Plato might consider himself fortunate in escaping from such a lion's den as the court of the savage Dionysius; and he had learnt a salutary lesson, that theoretical politics are not so easily put into practice as men think, and that caution and discretion are necessary in dealing with the powers that be.

On his return to Athens, weary of politics, and wishing to escape from the turmoil and distractions of the town, he retired to a house and garden which he had purchased (or inherited, for the accounts differ) at Colonus. There, or in the famous "olive grove" of the Academy close by, he gave lectures to, or held discussions with, a distinguished and constantly increasing body of pupils. Sauntering among the tall plane-trees, or pacing those historical colonnades, might be found all the wit and genius of the day,—men of science and men of letters—artists, poets, and, in greater numbers than all, would-be philosophers. The pupils of Plato, unlike the poor crushed followers of Socrates, are described by one comic poet as dandies with curled hair, elegant dress, and affected walk; and we are told by another how the master's broad shoulders towered above the rest, and how he charmed them with his sweet speech, "melodious as the song of the cicadas in the trees above his head." No one must suppose, however, that the subjects of discussion in the Academy were trivial or frivolous. Over

the gates was to be seen the formidable inscription—"Let none but Geometricians enter here;" and, according to Aristotle, the lectures were on the Supreme Good—*i.e.*, the One, as contrasted with the Infinite.

Twenty years thus passed, and Plato's eloquence was daily attracting to the Academy fresh students from all parts of Greece, when he received a second summons to visit Sicily from his old friend and pupil Dion, with whom he had kept up a constant correspondence. Dionysius I. was dead, and his empire, "fastened" (as he expressed it) "by chains of adamant," had passed to his son—a young, vain, and inexperienced prince, who had not inherited either the ability or energy of his father. Dion still retained his position as minister and family adviser, and there seemed to be at last an opening under the new *régime* for carrying out his favourite scheme of restoring liberty to the Syracusans. Accordingly he spared no pains to impress the young prince with the wisdom and eloquence of Plato; and so successfully did he work upon his better feelings, that Dionysius, says Plutarch, "was seized with a keen and frantic desire to hear and converse with the philosopher." He accordingly sent a pressing invitation to Plato, and this was coupled with a touching appeal from Archytas and other Pythagoreans, who looked eagerly forward to a regeneration of Syracuse. Plato (though reluctant to leave his work at the Academy) felt constrained to revisit Sicily—"less," says Grote in his History of Greece, "with the hope of succeeding in the intended conversion of Dionysius, than from the fear of hearing both himself and his philosophy taunted with confessed impotence, as fit only for the discussion of the school, and shrinking from all application to practice."

He was received at Syracuse with every mark of honour and respect. Dionysius himself came in his chariot to meet him on landing, and a public sacrifice was offered as a thanksgiving for his arrival. And at first all things went well. There was a reformation in the manners of the court. The royal banquets were curtailed; the conversation grew intellectual; and geometry became so much the fashion that nothing was to be seen in the palace but triangles and figures traced in the sand. Many of the foreign soldiers were dismissed; and

at an anniversary sacrifice, when the herald made the usual prayer—"May the gods long preserve the Tyranny, and may the Tyrant live for ever,"—Dionysius is said to have stopped him with the words—"Imprecate no such curse on me or mine." So deeply was he impressed by Plato's earnest pleading in behalf of liberty and toleration, that he was even prepared, we are told, to establish a limited monarchy in place of the existing despotism, and to restore free government to those Greek cities in Sicily which had been enslaved by his father. But Plato discountenanced any such immediate action; his pupil must go through the prescribed training, must reform himself, and be imbued with the true philosophical spirit, before he could be allowed to put his principles into practice. And thus, like other visionary schemes of reform, the golden opportunity passed away for ever. The ascendancy of "the Sophist from Athens" as Plato was contemptuously termed) roused the jealousy of the old Sicilian courtiers, and their slanders poisoned the mind of Dionysius, whose enthusiasm had already cooled. He grew suspicious of the designs of Dion, and, without giving him a chance of defending himself against his accusers, had him put on board a vessel and sent to Italy as an exile. Plato himself was detained a state prisoner in the palace, flattered and caressed by Dionysius, who appears to have had a sincere admiration and regard for him. but at the same time to have found the Platonic discipline too severe a trial for his own weak and luxurious nature. At last he was allowed to depart, after giving a conditional promise to return, in the event of Dion being recalled from exile. It is said that, as he was embarking, Dionysius said to him—"When thou art in the Academy with thy philosophers, thou wilt speak ill of me." "God forbid," was Plato's answer, "that we should have so much time to waste in the Academy as to speak of Dionysius at all."

Ten years later Plato is induced—for the third and last time—by the earnest appeal of Dionysius to revisit Syracuse; and a condition of his coming was to be the recall of Dion. As before, he is affectionately welcomed, and is treated as an honoured guest; but so far from Dion being recalled, his property is confiscated by Dionysius, and his wife given in marriage to



another man; and Plato (who only obtains leave to depart through the intercession of Archytas) is himself the bearer of the unwelcome news to Dion, whom he meets at the Olympic games on his way home. Dion (as we may easily imagine) is bitterly incensed at this last insult, and immediately sets about levying an army to assert his rights and procure his return by force. At Olympia he parts company from Plato, and the two friends never meet again. The remainder of Dion's eventful career (more romantic, perhaps, than that of any other hero of antiquity) has been well sketched by Mr. Grote, who records his triumphant entry into Syracuse, his short-lived popularity, the intrigues and conspiracy of Heraclides, whose life he had spared, and his base assassination by his friend Callippus.

Once more restored to Athens, Plato continued his lectures in the Academy, and also employed himself in composing those philosophical Dialogues which bear his name, and of which some thirty have come down to us. Several reasons probably contributed to make Plato throw his thoughts into this form. First, it was the only way in which he could give a just idea of the Socratic method, and of the persistent examination through which Socrates was wont to put all comers; again, he wished to show the chain of argument gradually unwinding itself, and by using the milder form of discussion and inquiry, to avoid even the appearance of dogmatism, especially as he must have often felt that he was treading on dangerous ground. Prolix and wearisome as some of these Dialogues may often seem to modern ears, we must remember that they were the first specimens of their kind; that they were written when the world was still young, when there was little writing of any sort, and when romances, essays, or "light literature" were unknown; while at the same time there was a clever, highly-educated, and sympathetic "public" ready then as now to devour, to admire, and to criticise. After the barren wastes of the old philosophy, with its texts and axioms, its quotations from the poets, and crude abstractions from nature, these Dialogues must have burst upon the Athenian world as an unexpected oasis upon weary travellers in the desert; and they must have hailed with delight these fresh springs of truth, and these new pastures for thought and feeling. As a new phase of literature, we may well be-



lieve that they were received with the same interest and surprise as the appearance of the 'Spectator' in the last century, or the 'Waverley Novels' at the beginning of our own. Plato assuredly knew well the lively and versatile character of those for whom he was writing. The grave and didactic tone of a modern treatise on philosophy would have fallen very flat on the ears of an Athenian audience, accustomed to see their gods, statesmen, and philosophers brought upon the stage in a grotesque medley, and unsparingly caricatured. But not Momus himself (as a Greek would have said) could have turned these Dialogues into ridicule; and their very faults—their want of method and general discursiveness—must have been a relief after the formal commonplace of the Sophists. Plato himself makes no pretence of following any rules or system. "Whither the argument blows, we will follow it," he says in the "Republic," and he is fond of telling us that a philosopher has plenty of time on his hands. But the vivacity and variety, the subtle humour—which can never be exactly reproduced in a translation—the charming scenes which serve as a framework to the discussion, and, above all, the purity and sweetness of the language, which earned for the writer the title of "The Attic Bee,"—all these were reasons for the popularity which these Dialogues undoubtedly enjoyed.

There is no means of fixing the order in which they were written, but they probably all belong to the last forty years of his life. A story is indeed extant to the effect that Socrates heard the "Lysis" read to him, and exclaimed—"Good heavens! what a heap of falsehoods this young man tells about me!" but Socrates had in all probability died some years before the "Lysis" was published. The speakers in these Dialogues are no more historical than the characters in Shakspeare's plays, and Plato was (perhaps purposely) careless of dates and names. But the personages thus introduced serve their purpose. They give a life and a reality to the scenes and conversations which is wanting in Berkeley's Dialogues and in all modern imitations, and their tempers and peculiarities are touched by a master-hand. But there is one character which Plato never paints, and that is—his own. Except in two casual allusions, he never directly or indirectly introduces himself;

and no one can argue, from the internal evidence of his writings, as to what he was or was not. Like Shakspeare, he deserves Coleridge's epithet of "myriad-minded," for he appears to us in all shapes and characters. He was, says Grote, "sceptic, dogmatist, religious mystic and inquisitor, mathematical philosopher, artist, poet—all in one, or at least all in succession, during the fifty years of his philosophical life."

There is one pervading feature of similarity in all the Dialogues, and that is, the style. If Jove had spoken Greek (it was said of old), he would have spoken it like Plato; and Quintilian—no mean critic—declared that his language soared so far at times above the ordinary prose, that it seemed as if the writer was inspired by the Delphic Oracle. But these very sentences which seem to us to flow so easily, and which we think must have been written *currente calamo*, were really elaborate in their simplicity; and the anecdote of thirteen different versions of the opening sentence in the "Republic" having been found in the author's handwriting is probably based upon fact.

Up to the age of eighty-one, Plato continued his literary work—"combing, and curling, and weaving, and unweaving his writings after a variety of fashions," says Dionysius of Halicarnassus; and death, so Cicero tells us, came upon him as he was seated at his desk, pen in hand. He was buried among the olive-trees in his own garden; and his disciples celebrated a yearly festival in his memory.

As might be expected, such a man did not escape satire and detraction even in his own day. To say that he was ridiculed by the comic poets, is merely to say that he paid the penalty common to all eminence at Athens; but he was accused of vanity, plagiarism, and what not, by writers such as Antisthenes and Aristoxenus, whose philosophy might have taught them better. Athenæus, with whom no reputation is sacred, devotes six successive chapters to a merciless attack on his personal character; and besides retailing some paltry anecdotes as to his being fond of figs, and inventing a musical water-clock which chimed the hours at night, he accuses him of jealousy and malevolence towards his brother philosophers, and tells a story to show his arrogance, and the dislike with which his companions regarded

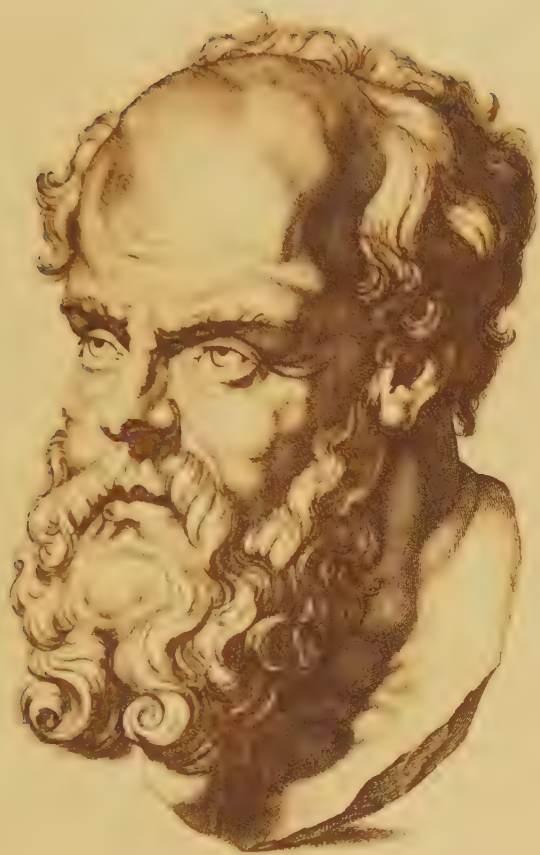
him. On the same evening that Socrates died (so says Athenæus), the select few who had been with him in the prison, met together at supper. All were sad and silent, and had not the heart to eat or drink. But Plato filled a cup with wine, and bade them be of good cheer, for he would worthily fill their master's place; and he invited Apollodorus to drink his health, and passed him the cup. But Apollodorus refused it with indignation, and said, "I would rather have pledged Socrates in his hemlock, than pledge you in this wine."

# PLATO

## THE APOLOGY OF SOCRATES

[DEFENSE AT HIS TRIAL]

How you have felt, O men of Athens, at hearing the speeches of my accusers, I cannot tell; but I know that their persuasive words almost made me forget who I was, such was the effect of them; and yet they have hardly spoken a word of truth. But many as their falsehoods were, there was one of them which quite amazed me: I mean when they told you to be upon your guard, and not to let yourselves be deceived by the force of my eloquence. They ought to have been ashamed of saying this, because they were sure to be detected as soon as I opened my lips and displayed my deficiency; they certainly did appear to be most shameless in saying this, unless by the force of eloquence they mean the force of truth; for then I do indeed admit that I am eloquent. But in how different a way from theirs! Well, as I was saying, they have hardly uttered a word, or not more than a word, of truth; but you shall hear from me the whole truth: not, however, delivered after their manner, in a set oration duly ornamented with words and phrases. No, indeed! but I shall use the words and arguments which occur to me at the moment; for I am certain that this is right, and that at my time of life I ought not to be appearing before you, O men of Athens, in the character of a juvenile orator: let no one expect this of me. And I must beg of you to grant me one favor, which is this,—If you hear me using the same words in my defense which I have been in the habit of using and which most of you may have heard in the agora [market place], and at the tables of the money-changers, or anywhere else, I would ask you not to be surprised at this, and not to interrupt me. For I am more than seventy years of age, and this is the first time that I have ever appeared in a court of law, and I am quite a stranger to the ways of the place; and therefore I would have you regard me as if I were really a stranger, whom you would







excuse if he spoke in his native tongue, and after the fashion of his country: that I think is not an unfair request. Never mind the manner, which may or may not be good; but think only of the justice of my cause, and give heed to that: let the judge decide justly and the speaker speak truly.

And first, I have to reply to the older charges and to my first accusers, and then I will go on to the later ones. For I have had many accusers, who accused me of old, and their false charges have continued during many years; and I am more afraid of them than of Anytus<sup>1</sup> and his associates, who are dangerous, too, in their own way. But far more dangerous are these, who began when you were children, and took possession of your minds with their falsehoods, telling of one Socrates, a wise man, who speculated about the heaven above, and searched into the earth beneath, and made the worse appear the better cause. These are the accusers who I dread; for they are the circulators of this rumor, and their hearers are too apt to fancy that speculators of this sort do not believe in the gods. And they are many, and their charges against me are of ancient date, and they made them in days when you were impressible—in childhood, or perhaps in youth—and the cause when heard went by default, for there was none to answer. And hardest of all, their names I do not know and cannot tell; unless in the chance case of a comic poet.<sup>2</sup> But the main body of these slanderers who from envy and malice have wrought upon you—and there are some of them who are convinced themselves, and impart their convictions to others—all these, I say, are most difficult to deal with; for I cannot have them up here, and examine them, and therefore I must simply fight with shadows in my own defense, and ex-

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<sup>1</sup> The chief accuser of Socrates. He hated Socrates for having influenced his son to study philosophy. He is said to have gone into exile after the death of Socrates to escape the vengeance of the repentant people.

<sup>2</sup> Aristophanes, twenty-five years before the trial of Socrates, wrote a comedy called *The Clouds*, in which he ridiculed the philosopher, representing him as a visionary with his head in the clouds, oblivious of mundane affairs, and so misleading his followers. [See Volume vii.]

amine when there is no one who answers. I will ask you then to assume with me, as I was saying, that my opponents are of two kinds—one recent, the other ancient; and I hope that you will see the propriety of my answering the latter first, for these accusations you heard long before the others, and much oftener.

Well, then, I will make my defense, and I will endeavor in the short time which is allowed to do away with this evil opinion of me which you have held for such a long time; and I hope that I may succeed, if this be well for you and me, and that my words may find favor with you. But I know that to accomplish this is not easy—I quite see the nature of the task. Let the event be as God wills: in obedience to the law I make my defense.

I will begin at the beginning, and ask what the accusation is which has given rise to this slander of me, and which has encouraged Meletus<sup>1</sup> to proceed against me. What do the slanderers say? They shall be my prosecutors, and I will sum up their words in an affidavit: "Socrates is an evil-doer, and a curious person, who searches into things under the earth and in heaven, and he makes the worse appear the better cause; and he teaches the aforesaid doctrines to others." That is the nature of the accusation, and that is what you have seen yourselves in the comedy of Aristophanes, who has introduced a man whom he calls Socrates, going about and saying that he can walk in the air, and talking a deal of nonsense concerning matters of which I do not pretend to know either much or little—not that I mean to say anything disparaging of any one who is a student of natural philosophy. I should be very sorry if Meletus could lay that to my charge. But the simple truth of this, and to them I appeal. Speak then, you who have studies. Very many of those here present are witnesses to the truth of this, and to them I appeal. Speak then, you who have heard me, and tell your neighbors whether any of you have ever known me hold forth in few words or in many upon

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<sup>1</sup> An obscure young tragic poet, who made the formal accusation against Socrates. He was the tool of Anytus and was stoned to death by the people in their revulsion of feeling after the death of Socrates.

matters of this sort. . . . You hear their answer. And from what they say of this you will be able to judge of the truth of the rest.

As little foundation is there for the report that I am a teacher, and take money; that is no more true than the other. Although, if a man is able to teach, I honor him for being paid. There is Gorgias of Leontium, and Prodicus of Ceos, and Hippias of Elis,<sup>1</sup> who go the round of the cities, and are able to persuade the young men to leave their own citizens, by whom they might be taught for nothing, and come to them whom they not only pay, but are thankful if they may be allowed to pay them. There is actually a Parian philosopher<sup>2</sup> residing in Athens, of whom I have heard; and I came to hear of him in this way: I met a man who has spent a world of money on the Sophists, Callias the son of Hipponicus, and knowing that he had sons, I asked him: "Callias," I said, "if your two sons were foals or calves, there would be no difficulty in finding some one to put over them; we should hire a trainer of horses, or a farmer probably, who would improve and perfect them in their own proper virtue and excellence; but as they are human beings, whom are you thinking of placing over them? Is there any one who understands human and political virtue? You must have thought about this as you have sons: is there any one?" "There is," he said. "Who is he?" said I, "and of what country? and what does he charge?" "Evenus the Parian," he replied; "he is the man, and his charge is five minæ."<sup>3</sup> Happy is Evenus, I said to myself, if he really has this wisdom, and teaches at such a modest charge.<sup>4</sup> Had I the same, I should have been very proud and conceited; but the truth is that I have no knowledge of the kind, O Athenians.

I dare say that some one will ask the question, "Why is this, Socrates, and what is the origin of these accusations of you: for there must have been something strange which you

<sup>1</sup> See article, *The Philosophers before Socrates*, on pages 69.

<sup>2</sup> Evenus of Paros, a poet, and rhetorician.

<sup>3</sup> About eighty or ninety dollars.

<sup>4</sup> Gorgias and Protagoras received as much as one hundred minæ (\$1600 to \$1800).

have been doing? All this great fame and talk about you would never have arisen if you had been like other men: tell us, then, why this is, as we should be sorry to judge hastily of you." Now I regard this as a fair challenge, and I will endeavor to explain to you the origin of this name of "wise," and of this evil fame. Please to attend, then. And although some of you may think that I am joking, I declare that I will tell you the entire truth. Men of Athens, this reputation of mine has come of a certain sort of wisdom which I possess. If you ask me what kind of wisdom, I reply, such wisdom as is attainable by man, for to that extent I am inclined to believe that I am wise; whereas the persons of whom I was speaking have a superhuman wisdom, which I may fail to describe, because I have it not myself; and he who says that I have, speaks falsely, and is taking away my character. And here, O men of Athens, I must beg you not to interrupt me, even if I seem to say something extravagant. For the word which I will speak is not mine. I will refer you to a witness who is worthy of credit, and will tell you about my wisdom—whether I have any, and of what sort—and that witness shall be the God of Delphi [Apollo]. You must have known Chærephon; he was early a friend of mine, and also a friend of yours, for he shared in the exile of the people,<sup>1</sup> and returned with you. Well, Chærephon, as you know, was very impetuous in all his doings, and he went to Delphi and boldly asked the oracle to tell him whether—as I was saying, I must beg you not to interrupt—he asked the oracle to tell him whether there was any one wiser than I was, and the Pythian prophetess answered, that there was no man wiser. Chærephon is dead himself, but his brother, who is in court, will confirm the truth of this story.

Why do I mention this? Because I am going to explain to you why I have such an evil name. When I heard the answer, I said to myself, What can the god mean? and what is the interpretation of this riddle? for I know that I have no

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<sup>1</sup> The Peloponnesian War (431-404 B.C.), was a conflict between Athens and Sparta in which Athens was defeated, and her most patriotic citizens sent into exile.



wisdom, small or great. What can he mean when he says that I am the wisest of men? And yet he is a god and cannot lie; that would be against his nature. After a long consideration, I at last thought of a method of trying the question. I reflected that if I could only find a man wiser than myself, then I might go to the god with a refutation of wisdom in my hand. I should say to him "Here is a man who is wiser than I am; but you said that I was the wisest." Accordingly I went to one who had the reputation of wisdom, and observed him—his name I need not mention; he was a politician whom I selected for examination—and the result was as follows: When I began to talk with him, I could not help thinking that he was not really wise, although he was thought wise by many, and wiser still by himself; and I went and tried to explain to him that he thought himself wise, but was not really wise; and the consequence was that he hated me, and his enmity was shared by several who were present and heard me. So I left him, saying to myself, as I went away: Well, although I do not suppose that either of us knows anything really beautiful and good, I am better off than he is—for he knows nothing, and thinks that he knows. I neither know nor think that I know. In this latter particular, then, I seem to have slightly the advantage of him. Then I went to another who had still higher philosophical pretensions, and my conclusion was exactly the same. I made another enemy of him, and of many others beside him.

After this I went to one man after another, being not unconscious of the enmity which I provoked, and I lamented and feared this: but necessity was laid upon me,—the word of God, I thought, ought to be considered first. And I said to myself, Go I must to all who appear to know, and find out the meaning of the oracle. And I swear to you, Athenians, by the dog<sup>1</sup> I swear!—for I must tell you the truth—the result of my mission was just this: I found that the men most in repute were all but the most foolish; and that some inferior men were really wiser and better. I will tell you the tale of my wanderings and of the "Herculean" labors, as I may call

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<sup>1</sup> An oath, of possibly Egyptian origin, often used by Socrates.

them, which I endured only to find at last the oracle irrefutable. When I left the politicians, I went to the poets; tragic, dithyrambic, and all sorts. And there, I said to myself, you will be detected: now you will find out that you are more ignorant than they are. Accordingly, I took them some of the most elaborate passages in their own writings, and asked what was the meaning of them—thinking that they would teach me something. Will you believe me? I am almost ashamed to speak of this, but still I must say that there is hardly a person present who would not have talked better about their poetry than they did themselves. That showed me in an instant that not by wisdom do poets write poetry, but by a sort of genius and inspiration; they are like diviners or soothsayers who also say many fine things, but do not understand the meaning of them. And the poets appeared to me to be much in the same case; and I further observed that upon the strength of their poetry they believed themselves to be the wisest of men in other things in which they were not wise. So I departed, conceiving myself to be superior to them for the same reason that I was superior to the politicians.

At last I went to the artisans, for I was conscious that I knew nothing at all, as I may say, and I was sure that they knew many fine things; and in this I was not mistaken, for they did know many things of which I was ignorant, and in this they certainly were wiser than I was. But I observed that even the good artisans fell into the same error as the poets; because they were good workmen they thought that they also knew all sorts of high matters, and this defect in them overshadowed their wisdom—therefore I asked myself on behalf of the oracle, whether I would like to be as I was, neither having their knowledge nor their ignorance, or like them in both; and I made answer to myself and the oracle that I was better off as I was.

This investigation has led to my having many enemies of the worst and most dangerous kind, and has given occasion also to many calumnies. And I am called wise, for my hearers always imagine that I myself possess the wisdom which I find wanting in others: but the truth is, O men of Athens, that God only is wise; and in this oracle he means to say that the

wisdom of men is little or nothing: he is not speaking of Socrates, he is only using my name as an illustration, as if he said, He, O men, is the wisest, who, like Socrates, knows that his wisdom is in truth worth nothing. And so I go my way, obedient to the god, and make inquisition into the wisdom of any one, whether citizen or stranger, who appears to be wise; and if he is not wise, then in vindication of the oracle I show him that he is not wise; and this occupation quite absorbs me, and I have no time to give either to any public matter of interest or to any concern of my own, but I am in utter poverty by reason of my devotion to the god.

There is another thing:—young men of the richer classes, who have not much to do, come about me of their own accord; they like to hear the pretenders examined, and they often imitate me, and examine others themselves; there are plenty of persons, as they soon enough discover, who think that they know something, but really know little or nothing: and then those who are examined by them instead of being angry with themselves are angry with me: This confounded Socrates, they say; this villainous misleader of youth!—and then if somebody asks them, Why, what evil does he practise or teach? they do not know, and cannot tell; but in order that they may not appear to be at a loss, they repeat the ready-made charges which are used against all philosophers about teaching things up in the clouds and under the earth, and having no gods, and making the worse appear the better cause; for they do not like to confess that their pretense of knowledge has been detected—which is the truth: and as they are numerous and ambitious and energetic, and are all in battle array and have persuasive tongues, they have filled your ears with their loud and inveterate calumnies. And this is the reason why my three accusers, Meletus and Anytus and Lycon,<sup>1</sup> have set upon me: Meletus, who has a quarrel with me on behalf of the poets; Anytus, on behalf of the craftsmen; Lycon, on behalf of the rhetoricians: and as I said at the beginning, I cannot expect to get rid of this mass of calumny all in a moment. And this, O

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<sup>1</sup> A rhetorician and orator, afterward banished for his part in the prosecution of Socrates.

men of Athens, is the truth and the whole truth; I have concealed nothing, I have dissembled nothing. And yet, I know that this plainness of speech makes them hate me, and what is their hatred but a proof that I am speaking the truth?—this is the occasion and reason of their slander of me, as you will find out either in this or in any future inquiry.

I have said enough in my defense against the first class of my accusers; I turn to the second class who are headed by Meletus, that good and patriotic man, as he calls himself. And now I will try to defend myself against them: these new accusers must also have their affidavit read. What do they say? Something of this sort: That Socrates is a doer of evil, and corrupter of the youth, and he does not believe in the gods of the State, and has other new divinities of his own. That is the sort of charge; and now let us examine the particular counts. He says that I am a doer of evil, who corrupt the youth; but I say, O men of Athens, that Meletus is a doer of evil, and the evil is that he makes a joke of a serious matter, and is too ready at bringing other men to trial from a pretended zeal and interest about matters in which he really never had the smallest interest. And the truth of this I will endeavor to prove.

[Socrates questions Meletus and forces him to confess that he himself is careless about the improvement of the youth. Then Socrates shows it is inconceivable that a man should intentionally injure those among whom he has to live. On Meletus charging that Socrates is an atheist, the philosopher shows the absurdity of charging a disbeliever in all gods with attempting to introduce new ones.]

I have said enough in answer to the charge of Meletus: any elaborate defense is unnecessary: but as I was saying before, I certainly have many enemies, and this is what will be my destruction if I am destroyed; of that I am certain; not Meletus, nor yet Anytus, but the envy and detraction of the world, which has been the death of many good men, and will probably be the death of many more; there is no danger of my being the last of them.

Some one will say: And are you not ashamed, Socrates, of a course of life which is likely to bring you to an untimely



end? To him I may fairly answer: There you are mistaken: a man who is good for anything ought not to calculate the chance of living or dying; he ought only to consider whether in doing anything he is doing right or wrong—acting the part of a good man or of a bad. Whereas, according to your view, the heroes who fell at Troy were not good for much, and the son of Thetis above all, who altogether despised danger in comparison with disgrace; and when his goddess mother said to him, in his eagerness to slay Hector, that if he avenged his companion Patroclus, and slew Hector, he would die himself,—“Fate,” as she said, “waits upon you next after Hector;” he, hearing this, utterly despised danger and death, and instead of fearing them, feared rather to live in dishonor, and not to avenge his friend. “Let me die next,” he replies, “and be avenged of my enemy, rather than abide here by the beaked ships, a scorn and a burden of the earth.” Had Achilles any thought of death and danger? For wherever a man’s place is, whether the place which he has chosen or that in which he has been placed by a commander, there he ought to remain in the hour of danger; he should not think of death or of anything, but of disgrace. And this, O men of Athens, is a true saying.

Strange, indeed, would be my conduct, O men of Athens, if I who, when I was ordered by the generals whom you chose to command me at Potidæa and Amphipolis and Delium, remained where they placed me, like any other man, facing death,—if, I say, now, when, as I conceive and imagine, God orders me to fulfill the philosopher’s mission of searching into myself and other men, I were to desert my post through fear of death, or any other fear; that would indeed be strange, and I might justly be arraigned in court for denying the existence of the gods, if I disobeyed the oracle because I was afraid of death: then I should be fancying that I was wise when I was not wise. For this fear of death is indeed the pretense of wisdom, and not real wisdom, being the appearance of knowing the unknown; since no one knows whether death, which they in their fear apprehend to be the greatest evil, may not be the greatest good. Is there not here conceit of knowledge, which is a disgraceful sort of ignorance? And this is the point in which,



as I might think, I am superior to men in general, and in which I might perhaps fancy myself wiser than other men,—that whereas I know but little of the world below,<sup>1</sup> I do not suppose that I know: but I do know that injustice and disobedience to a better, whether God or man, is evil and dishonorable, and I will never fear or avoid a possible good rather than a certain evil. And therefore if you let me go now, and reject the counsels of Anytus, who said that if I were not put to death I ought not to have been prosecuted, and that if I escape now, your sons will all be utterly ruined by listening to my words,—if you say to me, Socrates, this time we will not mind Anytus, and will let you off, but upon one condition, that you are not to inquire and speculate in this way any more, and that if you are caught doing this again you shall die,—if this was the condition on which you let me go, I should reply: Men of Athens, I honor and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy, exhorting any one whom I meet after my manner, and convincing him, saying: O my friend, why do you, who are a citizen of the great and mighty and wise city of Athens, care so much about laying up the greatest amount of money and honor and reputation, and so little about wisdom and truth and the greatest improvement of the soul, which you never regard or heed at all? Are you not ashamed of this? And if the person with whom I am arguing, says, Yes, but I do care: I do not depart or let him go at once; I interrogate and examine and cross-examine him, and if I think that he has no virtue, but only says that he has, I reproach him with undervaluing the greater, and overvaluing the less. And this I should say to every one whom I meet, young and old, citizen and alien, but especially to the citizens, inasmuch as they are my brethren. For this is the command to God, as I would have you know; and I believe that to this day no greater good has ever happened in the State than my service to the God. For I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons or your properties, but first and chiefly to

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<sup>1</sup> Tartarus, the place of punishment for evil souls.

care about the greatest improvement of the soul. I tell you that virtue is not given by money, but that from virtue come money and every other good of man, public as well as private. This is my teaching, and if this is the doctrine which corrupts the youth, my influence is ruinous indeed. But if any one says that this is not my teaching, he is speaking an untruth. Wherefore, O men of Athens, I say to you, do as Anytus bids or not as Anytus bids, and either acquit me or not; but whatever you do, know that I shall never alter my ways, not even if I have to die many times.

Men of Athens, do not interrupt, but hear me; there was an agreement between us that you should hear me out. And I think that what I am going to say will do you good: for I have something more to say, at which you may be inclined to cry out; but I beg that you will not do this. I would have you know, that if you kill such a one as I am, you will injure yourselves more than you will injure me. Meletus and Anytus will not injure me: they cannot; for it is not in the nature of things that a bad man should injure a better than himself. I do not deny that he may, perhaps, kill him, or drive him into exile, or deprive him of civil rights; and he may imagine, and others may imagine, that he is doing him a great injury: but in that I do not agree with him; for the evil of doing as Anytus is doing—of unjustly taking away another man's life—is greater far. And now, Athenians, I am not going to argue for my own sake, as you may think, but for yours, that you may not sin against the God, or lightly reject his boon by condemning me. For if you kill me you will not easily find another like me, who, if I may use such a ludicrous figure of speech, am a sort of gadfly, given to the State by the God; and the State is like a great and noble steed who is tardy in his motions owing to his very size, and requires to be stirred into life. I am that gladly which God has given the State, and all day long and in all places am always fastening upon you, arousing and persuading and reproaching you. And as you will not easily find another like me, I would advise you to spare me. I dare say that you may feel irritated at being suddenly awakened when you are caught napping; and you may think that if you were to strike me dead as Anytus advises, which you easily

might, then you would sleep on for the remainder of your lives, unless God in his care of you gives you another gadfly. And that I am given to you by God is proved by this: that if I had been like other men, I should not have neglected all my own concerns, or patiently seen the neglect of them during all these years, and have been doing yours, coming to you individually, like a father or elder brother, exhorting you to regard virtue; this, I say, would not be like human nature. And had I gained anything, or if my exhortations had been paid, there would have been some sense in that: but now, as you will perceive, not even the impudence of my accusers dares to say that I have ever exacted or sought pay of any one: they have no witness of that. And I have a witness of the truth of what I say; my poverty is a sufficient witness.

Some one may wonder why I go about in private, giving advice and busying myself with the concerns of others, but do not venture to come forward in public and advise the State. I will tell you the reason of this. You have often heard me speak of an oracle or sign which comes to me, and is the divinity which Meletus ridicules in the indictment. This sign I have had ever since I was a child. The sign is a voice which comes to me and always forbids me to do something which I am going to do, but never commands me to do anything, and this is what stands in the way of my being a politician. And rightly, as I think. For I am certain, O men of Athens, that if I had engaged in politics, I should have perished long ago, and done no good either to you or to myself. And don't be offended at my telling you the truth: for the truth is, that no man who goes to war with you or any other multitude, honestly struggling against the commission of unrighteousness and wrong in the State, will save his life; he who will really fight for the right, if he would live even for a little while, must have a private station and not a public one.

I can give you as proofs of this, not words only, but deeds, which you value more than words. Let me tell you a passage of my own life, which will prove to you that I should never have yielded to injustice from any fear of death, and that if I had not yielded I should have died at once. I will tell you a

story—tasteless, perhaps, and commonplace, but nevertheless true. The only office of state which I ever held, O men of Athens, was that of senator; the tribe Antiochis, which is my tribe, had the presidency at the trial of the generals who had not taken up the bodies of the slain after the battle of Arginusæ; and you proposed to try them all together, which was illegal, as you all thought afterwards; but at the time I was the only one of the prytanes who was opposed to the illegality, and I gave my vote against you; and when the orators threatened to impeach and arrest me, and have me taken away, and you called and shouted, I made up my mind that I would run the risk, having law and justice with me, rather than take part in your injustice because I feared imprisonment and death. This happened in the days of the democracy. But when the oligarchy of the Thirty<sup>1</sup> was in power, they sent for me and four others into the rotunda, and bade us bring Leon the Salaminian from Salamis, as they wanted to execute him. This was a specimen of the sort of commands which they were always giving with the view of implicating as many as possible in their crimes; and then I showed, not in word only but in deed, that, if I may be allowed to use such an expression, I cared not a straw for death, and that my only fear was the fear of doing an unrighteous or unholy thing. For the strong arm of that oppressive power did not frighten me into doing wrong; and when we came out of the rotunda the other four went to Salamis and fetched Leon, but I went quietly home. For which I might have lost my life, had not the power of the Thirty shortly afterwards come to an end. And to this many will witness.

Now do you really imagine that I could have survived all these years, if I had led a public life, supposing that like a good man I had always supported the right and had made justice, as I ought, the first thing? No indeed, men of Athens, neither I nor any other. But I have been always the same in all my actions, public as well as private, and never have I yielded any base compliance to those who are slanderously termed my

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<sup>1</sup> The oligarchical commission, dictated by Sparta, that ruled Athens after its subjugation in the Peloponnesian War.



disciples,<sup>1</sup> or to any other. For the truth is that, I have no regular disciples: but if any one likes to come and hear me while I am pursuing my mission, whether he be young or old, he may freely come. Nor do I converse with those who pay only, and not with those who do not pay; but any one, whether he be rich or poor, may ask and answer me and listen to my words; and whether he turns out to be a bad man or a good one, that cannot be justly laid to my charge, as I never taught him anything. And if any one says that he has ever learned or heard anything from me in private which all the world has not heard, I should like you to know that he is speaking an untruth.

But I shall be asked, Why do people delight in continually conversing with you? I have told you already, Athenians, the whole truth about this: they like to hear the cross-examination of the pretenders to wisdom; there is amusement in this. And this is a duty which the God has imposed upon me, as I am assured by oracles, visions, and in every sort of way in which the will of divine power was ever signified to any one. This is true, O Athenians; or, if not true, would be soon refuted. For if I am really corrupting the youth, and have corrupted some of them already, those of them who have grown up and have become sensible that I gave them bad advice in the days of their youth should come forward as accusers and take their revenge; and if they do not like to come themselves, some of their relatives, fathers, brothers, or other kinsmen, should say what evil their families suffered at my hands. Now is their time. Many of them I see in the court. There is Crito, who is of the same age and of the same deme [township] with myself; and there is Critobulus his son, whom I also see. Then again there is Lysanias of Sphettus, who is the father of Æschines,—he is present; and also there is Antiphon of Cephissus, who is the father of Epigenes; and there are the brothers of several who have associated with me. There is Nicosratus the son of Theosdotides, and the brother of Theodotus (now Theodotus himself is dead, and therefore he, at any

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<sup>1</sup> Chities, one of the Thirty Tyrants, and Alcibiades, who had in youth mingled with Socrates and his disciples.



rate, will not seek to stop him); and there is Paralus the son of Demodocus, who had a brother Theages, and Adeimantus the son of Ariston, whose brother Plato is present; and Antodorus, who is the brother of Apollodorus, whom I also see. I might mention a great many others, any of whom Meletus should have produced as witnesses in the course of his speech; and let him still produce them, if he has forgotten; I will make way for him. And let him say, if he has any testimony of the sort which he can produce. Nay, Athenians, the very opposite is the truth. For all these are ready to witness on behalf of the corrupter, of the destroyer of their kindred, as Meletus and Anytus call me; not the corrupted youth only,—there might have been a motive for that,—but their uncorrupted elder relatives. Why should they too support me with their testimony? Why, indeed, except for the sake of truth and justice, and because they know that I am speaking the truth, and that Meletus is lying.

Well, Athenians, this and the like of this is nearly all the defense which I have to offer. Yet a word more. Perhaps there may be some one who is offended at me, when he calls to mind how he himself on a similar, or even a less serious occasion, had recourse to prayers and supplications with many tears, and how he produced his children in court, which was a moving spectacle, together with a posse of his relations and friends: whereas I, who am probably in danger of my life, will do none of these things. Perhaps this may come into his mind, and he may be set against me, and vote in anger because he is displeased at this. Now if there be such a person among you, which I am far from affirming, I may fairly reply to him: My friend, I am a man, and like other men, a creature of flesh and blood, and not of wood or stone, as Homer says; and I have a family, yes, and sons, O Athenians, three in number, one of whom is growing up, and the two others are still young; and yet I will not bring any of them hither in order to petition you for an acquittal. And why not? Not from any self-will or disregard of you. Whether I am or am not afraid of death is another question, of which I will not now speak. But my reason simply is, that I feel such conduct to be discreditable to myself, and you, and the whole State. One who has reached

my years, and who has a name for wisdom, whether deserved or not, ought not to demean himself. At any rate, the world has decided that Socrates is in some way superior to other men.

And if those among you who are said to be superior in wisdom and courage, and any other virtue, demean themselves in this way, how shameful is their conduct! I have seen men of reputation, when they have been condemned, behaving in the strangest manner: they seemed to fancy that they were going to suffer something dreadful if they died, and that they could be immortal if you only allowed them to live; and I think that they were a dishonor to the State, and that any stranger coming in would say of them that the most eminent men of Athens, to whom the Athenians themselves give honor and command, are no better than women. And I say that these things ought not to be done by those of us who are of reputation; and if they are done, you ought not to permit them; you ought rather to show that you are more inclined to condemn, not the man who is quiet, but the man who gets up a doleful scene, and makes the city ridiculous.

But, setting aside the question of dishonor, there seems to be something wrong in petitioning a judge, and thus procuring an acquittal instead of informing and convincing him. For his duty is, not to make a present of justice, but to give judgment; and he has sworn that he will judge according to the laws, and not according to his own good pleasure; and neither he nor we should get into the habit of perjuring ourselves—there can be no piety in that. Do not then require me to do what I consider dishonorable and impious and wrong, especially now, when I am being tried for impiety on the indictment of Meletus. For if, O men of Athens, by force of persuasion and entreaty, I could overpower your oaths, then I should be teaching you to believe that there are no gods, and convict myself, in my own defense, of not believing in them. But that is not the case; for I do believe that there are gods, and in a far higher sense than that in which any of my accusers believe in them. And to you and to God I commit my cause, to be determined by you as is best for you and me.

[Socrates is convicted. He then arises and speaks:]

There are many reasons why I am not grieved, O men of Athens, at the vote of condemnation. I expected this, and am only surprised that the votes are so nearly equal; for I had thought that the majority against me would have been far larger; but now, had thirty votes gone over to the other side, I should have been acquitted. And I may say that I have escaped Meletus. And I may say more; for without the assistance of Anytus and Lycon, he would not have had a fifth part of the votes, as the law requires, in which case he would have incurred a fine of a thousand drachmæ [\$160 to \$180], as is evident.

And so he proposes death as the penalty. And what shall I propose on my part,<sup>1</sup> O men of Athens? Clearly that which is my due. And what is that which I ought to pay or to receive? What shall be done to the man who has never had the wit to be idle during his whole life; but has been careless of what the many care about—wealth, and family interests, and military offices, and speaking in the assembly, and magistracies, and plots, and parties. Reflecting that I was really too honest a man to follow in this way and live, I did not go where I could do no good to you or to myself; but where I could do the greatest good privately to every one of you, thither I went, and sought to persuade every man among you, that he must look to himself, and seek virtue and wisdom before he looks to his private interests, and look to the State before he looks to the interests of the State; and that this should be the order which he observes in all his actions. What shall be done to such a one? Doubtless some good

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<sup>1</sup> "In Athenian procedure, the penalty inflicted was determined by a separate vote of the *Dikasts*" (officers somewhat like our jurymen) "taken after the verdict of guilty. The accuser having named the penalty which he thought suitable, the accused party on his side named some lighter penalty upon himself; and between those two the *Dikasts* were called on to make their option—no third proposition being admissible. The prudence of an accused party always induced him to propose, even against himself, some measure of punishment which the *Dikasts* might be satisfied to accept, in preference to the heavier sentence invoked by his antagonist."—Grote's *History of Greece*.

thing, O men of Athens, if he has his reward; and the good should be of a kind suitable to him. What would be a reward suitable to a poor man who is your benefactor, who desires leisure that he may instruct you? There can be no more fitting reward than maintenance in the prytaneum,<sup>1</sup> O men of Athens, a reward which he deserves far more than the citizen who has won the prize at Olympia in the horse or chariot race, whether the chariots were drawn by two horses or by many. For I am in want, and he has enough; and he only gives you the appearance of happiness, and I give you the reality. And if I am to estimate the penalty justly, I say that maintenance in the prytaneum is the just return.

Perhaps you may think that I am braving you in saying this, as in what I said before about the tears and prayer. But that is not the case. I speak rather because I am convinced that I never intentionally wronged any one, although I cannot convince you of that—for we have had a short conversation only; but if there were a law at Athens, such as there is in other cities, that a capital cause should not be decided in one day, then I believe I should have convinced you; but now the time is too short. I cannot in a moment refute great slanders; and, as I am convinced that I never wronged another, I will assuredly not wrong myself. I will not say of myself that I deserve any evil, or propose any penalty. Why should I. Because I am afraid of the penalty of death which Meletus proposes? When I do not know whether death is a good or an evil, why should I propose a penalty which would certainly be an evil? Shall I say imprisonment? And why should I live in prison, and be the slave of the magistrates of the year—of the eleven [police commissioners]? Or shall the penalty be a fine, and imprisonment until the fine is paid? There is the same objection. I should have to lie in prison, for money I have none, and cannot pay. And if I say exile (and this may possibly be the penalty which you will affix), I must indeed be blinded by the love of life, if I were to con-

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<sup>1</sup> A public hotel wherein entertainment was furnished by the government to foreign ambassadors and to citizens whom the State wished to honor.



sider that when you, who are my own citizens, cannot endure my discourses and words, and have found them so grievous and odious that you would fain have done with them, others are likely to endure me. No indeed, men of Athens, that is not very likely. And what a life should I lead, at my age, wandering from city to city, living in ever-changing exile, and always being driven out! For I am quite sure that into whatever place I go, as here so also there, the young men will come to me; and if I drive them away, their elders will drive me out at their desire: and if I let them come, their fathers and friends will drive me out for their sakes.

Some one will say: Yes, Socrates, but cannot you hold your tongue, and then you may go into a foreign city, and no one will interfere with you? Now I have great difficulty in making you understand my answer to this. For if I tell you that this would be a disobedience to a divine command, and therefore that I cannot hold my tongue, you will not believe that I am serious; and if I say again that the greatest good of man is daily to converse about virtue, and all that concerning which you hear me examining myself and others, and that the life which is unexamined is not worth living—that you are still less likely to believe. And yet what I say is true, although a thing of which it is hard for me to persuade you. Moreover, I am not accustomed to think that I deserve any punishment. Had I money I might have proposed to give you what I had, and have been none the worse. But you see that I have none, and can only ask you to proportion the fine to my means. However, I think that I could afford a mina, and therefore I propose that penalty: Plato, Crito, Critobulus, and Apollodorus, my friends here, bid me say thirty minæ, and they will be the sureties. Well, then, say thirty minæ, let that be the penalty; for that they will be ample security to you.

Not much time will be gained, O Athenians, in return for the evil name which you will get from the detractors of the city, who will say that you killed Socrates, a wise man; for they will call me wise even although I am not wise when they want to reproach you. If you had waited a little while, your desire would have been fulfilled in the course of nature. For I



am far advanced in years, as you may perceive, and not far from death. I am speaking now only to those of you who have condemned me to death. And I have another thing to say to them: You think that I was convicted through deficiency of words—I mean, that if I had thought fit to leave nothing undone, nothing unsaid, I might have gained an acquittal. Not so; the deficiency which led to my conviction was not of words—certainly not. But I had not the boldness or impudence or inclination to address you as you would have liked me to address you, weeping and wailing and lamenting, and saying and doing many things which you have been accustomed to hear from others and which, as I say, are unworthy of me. But I thought that I ought not to do anything common or mean in the hour of danger: nor do I now repent of the manner of my defense, and I would rather die having spoken after my manner, than speak in your manner and live. For neither in war nor yet at law ought any man to use every way of escaping death. For often in battle there is no doubt that if a man will throw away his arms, and fall on his knees before his pursuers, he may escape death; and in other dangers there are other ways of escaping death, if a man is willing to say and do anything. The difficulty, my friends, is not in avoiding death, but in avoiding unrighteousness; for that runs faster than death. I am old and move slowly, and the slower runner has overtaken me, and my accusers are keen and quick, and the faster runner, who is unrighteousness, has overtaken them. And now I depart hence condemned by you to suffer the penalty of death, and they too go their ways condemned by the truth to suffer the penalty of villainy and wrong; and I must abide by my award—let them abide by theirs. I suppose that these things may be regarded as fated,—and I think that they are well.

And now, O men who have condemned me, I would fain prophesy to you; for I am about to die, and that is the hour in which men are gifted with prophetic power. And I prophesy to you who are my murderers, that immediately after my death punishment far heavier than you have inflicted on me will surely await you. Me you have killed because you wanted to escape the accuser, and not to give an account of

your lives. But that will not be as you suppose: far other wise. For I say that there will be more accusers of you than there are now; accusers whom hitherto I have restrained: and as they are younger they will be more severe with you, and you will be more offended at them. For if you think that by killing men you can avoid the accuser censuring your lives, you are mistaken; that is not a way of escape which is either possible or honorable; the easiest and the noblest way is not to be crushing others, but to be improving yourselves. This is the prophecy which I utter before my departure to the judges who have condemned me.

Friends, who would have acquitted me, I would like also to talk with you about this thing which has happened, while the magistrates are busy, and before I go to the place at which I must die. Stay then a while, for we may as well talk with one another while there is time. You are my friends, and I should like to show you the meaning of this event which has happened to me. O my judges—for you I may truly call judges—I should like to tell you of a wonderful circumstance. Hitherto the familiar oracle within me has constantly been in the habit of opposing me even about trifles, if I was going to make a slip or error about anything; and now as you see there has come upon me that which may be thought, and is generally believed to be, the last and worst evil. But the oracle made no sign of opposition, either as I was leaving my house and going out in the morning, or when I was going up into this court, or while I was speaking, at anything which I was going to say; and yet I have often been stopped in the middle of a speech, but now in nothing I either said or did touching this matter has the oracle opposed me. What do I take to be the explanation of this? I will tell you. I regard this as a proof that what has happened to me is a good, and that those of us who think that death is an evil are in error. This is a great proof to me of what I am saying, for the customary sign would surely have opposed me had I been going to evil and not to good.

Let us reflect in another way, and we shall see that there is great reason to hope that death is a good, for one of two things: either death is a state of nothingness and utter un-

consciousness, or, as men say, there is a change and migration of the soul from this world to another. Now if you suppose that there is no consciousness, but a sleep like the sleep of him who is undisturbed even by the sight of dreams, death will be an unspeakable gain. For if a person were to select the night in which his sleep was undisturbed even by dreams, and were to compare with this the other days and nights of his life, and then were to tell us how many days and nights he had passed in the course of his life better and more pleasantly than this one, I think that any man, I will not say a private man, but even the great king [of Persia] will not find many such days or nights, when compared with the others. Now if death is like this, I say that to die is gain; for eternity is then only a single night. But if death is the journey to another place, and there, as men say, all the dead are, what good, O my friends and judges, can be greater than this? If indeed when the pilgrim arrives in the world below, he is delivered from the professors of justice in this world, and finds the true judges who are said to give judgment there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Æacus and Triptolemus, and other sons of God who were righteous in their own life, that pilgrimage will be worth making. What would not a man give if he might converse with Orpheus and Musæus and Hesiod and Homer? Nay, if this be true, let me die again and again. I, too, shall have a wonderful interest in a place where I can converse with Palamedes, and Ajax the son of Telamon, and other heroes of old, who have suffered death through an unjust judgment; and there will be no small pleasures, as I think, in comparing my own sufferings with theirs. Above all, I shall be able to continue my search into true and false knowledge; as in this world, so also in that; I shall find out who is wise, and who pretends to be wise, and is not. What would not a man give, O judges, to be able to examine the leader of the great Trojan expedition; or Odysseus or Sisyphus, or numberless others, men and women too! What infinite delight would there be in conversing with them and asking them questions! For in that world they do not put a man to death for this; certainly not. For besides being hap-

pier in that world than in this, they will be immortal, if what is said is true.

Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know this of a truth—that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death. He and his are not neglected by the gods; nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance. But I see clearly that to die and be released was better for me; and therefore the oracle gave no sign. For which reason, also, I am not angry with my accusers or my condemners; they have done me no harm, although neither of them meant to do me any good; and for this I may gently blame them.

Still I have a favor to ask of them. When my sons are grown up, I would ask you, O my friends, to punish them; and I would have you trouble them, as I have troubled you, if they seem to care about riches, or anything, more than about virtue; or if they pretend to be something when they are really nothing,—then reprove them, as I have reproved you, for not caring about that for which they ought to care, and thinking that they are something when they are really nothing. And if you do this, I and my sons will have received justice at your hands.

The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways—I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows.





THE  
PHÆDO OF PLATO

*TRANSLATED BY*

BENJAMIN JOWETT

MASTER OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

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*WITH AN INTRODUCTION*

BY THE SAME

## SOCRATES

[THE PHÆDO OF PLATO]

WHEN CEBES CEASED, WE SAT IN MUTE DESPAIR;  
BUT SOCRATES, TO DISSIPATE OUR DREAD,  
LEANED TOWARD MY LOWLY STOOL AND STROKED MY HEAD.  
"TO-MORROW SEES, PERCHANCE, THESE LOCKS SO FAIR  
ALL SHORN FOR GRIEF," FONDLING MY CURLY HAIR,  
AS WAS HIS WONT, THE GENTLE MASTER SAID.  
"AND YET BOTH THINE AND MINE TO-DAY INSTEAD  
SHOULD FALL FOR SHAME ERE OUR OPPONENTS BEAR  
AN UNCONTESTED VICTORY AWAY."  
"E'EN HERCULES WAS NOT A MATCH FOR TWO,"  
SAID I; HE ANSWERED, "CALL THOU THEN ON ME,  
THINE IOLAUS,—WHILE IT YET IS DAY."<sup>1</sup>  
THAT SIMPLE PHRASE,—O SINGLE HEART AND TRUE,  
NOT I, BUT THOU, THE HERO VERILY!

## JESUS

[THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN]

AND SAYING THIS, HE WAS IN SPIRIT STIRRED,  
AND TESTIFIED AND SPAKE, "I TELL YOU TRUE,  
I AM TO BE BETRAYED BY ONE OF YOU."  
WE LOOKED ONE ON ANOTHER WHEN WE HEARD,  
DOUBTING OF WHOM HE SPAKE THE DREADFUL WORD.  
NOW LEANED ON JESUS' BOSOM ONE WE KNEW  
LOVED BY THE MASTER, AS HE LOVED BUT FEW;  
WITH THIS ONE, PETER, BECKONING, CONFERRED  
THAT HE SHOULD SEEK THE NAME. "WHO IS IT, LORD?"  
THE LOVED ONE ASKED, PRESUMING ON HIS LOVE.  
SAID JESUS, "HE TO WHOM I GIVE THE BREAD  
WHEN I HAVE DIPPED IT." THEN TO HIM ABHORRED,  
JUDAS, HE GAVE IT. O FORGIVING DOVE!  
O LAMB OF GOD THAT UNCOMPLAINING BLED!

M. M. M.

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<sup>1</sup> At nightfall he was to take the hemlock.

# INTRODUCTION TO PHÆDO

BY BENJAMIN JOWETT

Master of Balliol College, Oxford

AFTER an interval of some months or years, at Phlius, a town of Sicyon, the tale of the last hours of Socrates is narrated to Echecrates and other Phliasians by Phædo, the "beloved disciple." The dialogue necessarily takes the form of a narrative, because Socrates has to be described acting as well as speaking. The minutest particulars of the event are interesting to distant friends, and the narrator has an equal interest in them.

During the voyage of the sacred ship to and from Delos, which has occupied thirty days, the execution of Socrates has been deferred. The time has been passed by him in conversation with a select company of disciples. But now the holy season is over, and the disciples meet earlier than usual in order that they may converse with Socrates for the last time. Those who were present, and those who might have been expected to be present, are specially mentioned. There are Simmias and Cebes, two disciples of Philolaus whom Socrates "by his enchantments has attracted from Thebes," Crito the aged friend, the attendant of the prison, who is as good as a friend,—these take part in the conversation. There are present also, Hermogenes, from whom Xenophon derived his information about the trial of Socrates; the "madman" Apollodorus; Euclid and Terpsion from Megara; Ctesippus, Antisthenes Menexenus, and some other less-known members of the Socratic circle, all of whom are silent auditors. Aristippus and Plato are noted as absent. Soon the wife and children of Socrates are sent away, under the direction of Crito; he himself has just been released from chains, and is led by this circumstance to make the natural remark that "Pleasure follows pain." (Observe that Plato is preparing the way for his doctrine of the alternation of opposites.) "Æsop would have represented them in a

fable as a two-headed creature of the gods." The mention of Æsop reminds Cebes of a question which had been asked by Evenus the poet: "Why Socrates, who was not a poet, while in prison had been putting Æsop into verse?" "Because several times in his life he had been warned in dreams that he should make music; and as he was about to die and was not certain what was the meaning of this, he wished to fulfil the admonition in the letter as well as in the spirit, by writing verses as well as by cultivating philosophy. Tell Evenus this and bid him follow me in death." "He is not the sort of man to do that, Socrates." Why, is he not a philosopher? "Yes." "Then he will be willing to die, although he will not take his own life, for that is held not to be right."

Cebes asks why men say that suicide is not right, if death is to be accounted a good? Well, (1) according to one explanation, because man is a prisoner, and is not allowed to open the door of his prison and run away—this is the truth in a "mystery." Or rather, perhaps, (2) because man is not his own property, but a possession of the gods, and he has no right to make away with that which does not belong to him. But why, asks Cebes, if he is a possession of the gods, will he wish to die and leave them? for he is under their protection; and surely he cannot take better care of himself than they take of him. Simmias explains that Cebes is really referring to Socrates, whom they think too unmoved at the prospect of leaving the gods and his friends. Socrates answers that he is going to other gods who are wise and good, and perhaps to better friends; and he professes that he is ready to defend himself against the charge of Cebes. They shall be his judges, and he hopes that he will be more successful in convincing them than he had been in convincing the court.

The philosopher desires death—which the wicked world will insinuate that he also deserves: and perhaps he does, but not in any sense which they are capable of understanding. Enough of them: the real question is, What is the nature of that death which he desires? Death is the separation of soul and body—and the philosopher desires such a separation. He would like to be freed from the dominion of bodily pleasures and of the senses, which are always perturbant his mental

vision. He wants to get rid of eyes and ears, and with the light of the mind only to behold the light of truth. All the evils and impurities and necessities of men come from the body. And death separates him from these evils, which in this life he cannot wholly cast aside. Why then should he repine when the hour of separation arrives? Why, if he is dead while he lives, should he fear that other death, through which alone he can behold wisdom in her purity?

Besides, the philosopher has notions of good and evil unlike those of other men. For they are courageous because they are afraid of greater dangers, and temperate because they desire greater pleasures. But he disdains this balancing of pleasures and pains; he knows no virtue but that which is the companion of wisdom. All the virtues, including wisdom, are regarded by him only as purifications of the soul. And this was the meaning of the founders of the mysteries when they said, "Many are the wand bearers, but few are the mystics." (Cp. Matt. xxii. 14: "Many are called, but few are chosen.") And in the hope that he is one of these mystics, Socrates is now departing. This is his answer to those who charge him with indifference at the prospect of leaving the gods and his friends.

Still, a fear is expressed that the soul, upon leaving the body, may vanish away like smoke or air. Socrates in answer appeals first of all to the old Orphic tradition that the souls of the dead are in the world below, and that the living come from them. This he attempts to found on a philosophical assumption that all opposites—*e.g.* less, greater; weaker, stronger; sleeping, waking; life, death—are generated out of each other. Nor can this process of generation be only a passage from living to dying, for then all would end in death. The perpetual sleeper (Endymion) would be no longer distinguished, for all the world would sink in rest. The circle of nature is not complete unless the living come from the dead as well as pass to them.

The favorite Platonic doctrine of reminiscence is then introduced as a confirmation of the pre-existence of the soul. Some proofs of this doctrine are demanded. One proof given is derived from the latent knowledge of mathematics, which may



be elicited from an unlearned person when a diagram is presented to him. Again, there is a power of association, which from seeing Simmias may remember Cebes, or from seeing a picture of Simmias may remember Simmias. The lyre may recall the player of the lyre, and equal pieces of wood or stone may be associated with the higher notion of absolute equality. But here observe that material equalities fall short of the conception of absolute equality with which they are compared, and which is the measure of them. And the measure of standard must be prior to that which is measured, the idea of equality prior to the visible equals. And if prior to them, then prior also to the perceptions of the senses which recall them, and therefore either given before birth or at birth. But all men have not this knowledge, nor have any without a process of reminiscence; and this is a proof that it is not innate or given at birth (unless indeed it was given and taken away at the same instant, which is absurd). But if not given to men in birth, it must have been given before birth—this is the only alternative which remains. And if we had ideas in a former state, then our souls must have existed and must have had intelligence in a former state. The pre-existence of the soul stands or falls with the doctrine of ideas.

It is objected by Simmias and Cebes that these arguments only prove a former and not a future existence. Socrates answers this objection by recalling the previous argument, in which he had shown that the living had come from the dead. But the fear that the soul at departing may vanish into air (especially if there is a wind blowing at the time) has not yet been charmed away. He proceeds: When we fear that the soul will vanish away, let us ask ourselves what is that we suppose to be liable to dissolution? Is it the simple or the compound, the unchanging or the changing, the invisible idea or the visible object of sense? Clearly the latter and not the former; and therefore not the soul, which in her own pure thought is unchangeable, and only when using the senses descends into the region of change. Again, the soul commands, the body serves: in this respect too the soul is akin to the divine, and the body to the mortal. And in every point of view the soul is the image of divinity and immortality, and the

body of the human and mortal. And whereas the body is liable to speedy dissolution, the soul is almost if not quite indissoluble. Yet even the body may be preserved for ages by the embalmer's art; how much more the soul returning into herself on her way to the good and wise God! She has been practising death all her life long, and is now finally released from the errors and follies and passions of men, and forever dwells in the company of the gods.

But the soul which is polluted and engrossed by the corporeal, and has no eye except that of the senses, and is weighed down by the bodily appetites, cannot attain to this abstraction. In her fear of the world below she lingers about her sepulcher, a ghostly apparition, saturated with sense, and therefore visible. At length she enters into the body of some animal of a nature congenial to her former life of sensuality or violence, and becomes an ass or a wolf or a kite. And of these earthly souls the happiest are those who have practised virtue without philosophy; they are allowed to pass into gentle and civil natures, such as bees and ants. But only the philosopher who departs pure is permitted to enter the company of the gods. This is the reason why he abstains from fleshly lusts, and not from the fear of loss or disgrace, which are the motives of other men. He too has been a captive, and the willing agent of his own captivity. But Philosophy has spoken to him, and he has heard her voice; she has gently entreated him, and brought his soul out of the "miry clay," and purged away the mists of passion and the illusions of sense which envelop her, and taught her to resist the influence of pleasures and pains, which are like nails fastening her to the body. To that prison-house she will not return; and therefore she abstains from bodily pleasures—not from a desire of having more or greater ones, which is the exchange of commerce and not of virtue, but because she knows that only in the calm of pleasures and passions she will behold the light of truth.

Simmias and Cebes remain in doubt; but they are unwilling to raise objections at such a time. Socrates wonders at this. Let them regard him rather as the swan, who, having sung the praises of Apollo all his life long, sings at his death more lustily than ever. Simmias acknowledges that there is cow-

ardice in not probing truth to the bottom. "And if truth divine and inspired is not to be had, then let a man take the best of human notions, and upon this frail bark let him sail through life." He proceeds to state his difficulty: It has been argued that the soul is invisible and incorporeal, and therefore immortal, and prior to the body. But is not the soul acknowledged to be a harmony, and has she not the same relation to the body, as the harmony—which like her is invisible—has to the lyre? And yet the harmony does not survive the lyre. Cebes has also an objection, which like Simmias he expresses in a figure. He is willing to admit that the soul is more lasting than the body. But the more lasting nature of the soul does not prove her immortality; for after having worn out many bodies in a single life, and many more in successive births and deaths, she may at last perish, or, as Socrates afterwards restates the objection, the very act of birth may be the beginning of her death, and the last body may survive the last soul, just as the coat of an old weaver is left behind him after he is dead, although a man is more lasting than his coat. And he who would prove the immortality of the soul must prove not only that the soul outlives one or many bodies, but that she outlives them all.

The audience, like the chorus in a play, for a moment interpret the feelings of the actors; there is a temporary depression, and then the inquiry is resumed. It is a melancholy reflection that arguments, like men, are apt to be deceivers; and those who have been often deceived become distrustful both of arguments and of friends. But this unfortunate experience should not make us either haters of men or haters of arguments. The hatred of arguments is equally mistaken, whether we are going to live or die. At the approach of death Socrates desires to be impartial, and yet he cannot help feeling that he has too great an interest in the truth of his own argument. And therefore he wishes his friends to examine and refute him, if they think that he is not speaking the truth.

Socrates requests Simmias and Cebes to state their objections again. They do not go to the length of denying the pre-existence of ideas. Simmias is of opinion that the soul is a harmony of the body. But the admission of the pre-existence

of ideas, and therefore of the soul, is at variance with this. For a harmony is an effect, whereas the soul is not an effect, but a cause; a harmony follows, but the soul leads; a harmony admits of degrees, and the soul has no degrees. Again, upon the supposition that the soul is a harmony, why is one soul better than another? Are they more or less harmonized, or is there one harmony within another? But the soul does not admit of degrees, and cannot therefore be more or less harmonized. Further, the soul is often engaged in resisting the affections of the body, as Homer describes Odysseus "rebuking his heart." Could he have written this under the idea that the soul is a harmony of the body? Nay; rather, are we not contradicting Homer and ourselves in affirming anything of the sort?

The goddess Harmonia, as Socrates playfully terms the argument of Simmias, has been happily disposed of; and now an answer has to be given to the Theban Cadmus. Socrates recapitulates the argument of Cebes, which, as he remarks, involves the whole question of natural growth or causation; about this he proposes to narrate his own mental experience. When he was young he had puzzled himself with physics: he had inquired into the growth and decay of animals, and the origin of thought, until at last he began to doubt the self-evident fact that growth is the result of eating and drinking, and thus he arrived at the conclusion that he was not meant for such inquiries. Nor was he less perplexed with notions of comparison and number. At first he had imagined himself to understand differences of greater and less, and to know that ten is two more than eight, and the like. But now those very notions appeared to him to contain a contradiction. For how can one be divided into two? or two be compounded into one? These are difficulties which Socrates cannot answer. Of generation and destruction he knows nothing. But he has a confused notion of another method in which matters of this sort are to be investigated.

Then he heard some one reading out of a book of Anaxagoras, that mind is the cause of all things. And he said to himself: If mind is the cause of all things, mind must dispose them all for the best. The new teacher will show me this



“order of the best” in man and nature. How great had been his hopes and how great his disappointment! For he found that his new friend was anything but consistent in his use of mind as a cause, and that he soon introduced winds, waters, and other eccentric notions. It was as if a person had said that Socrates is sitting here because he is made up of bones and muscles, instead of telling the true reason—that he is here because the Athenians have thought good to sentence him to death, and he has thought good to await his sentence. Had his bones and muscles been left by him to their own ideas of right, they would long ago have taken themselves off. But surely there is a great confusion of the cause and condition in all this. And this confusion also leads people into all sorts of erroneous theories about the position and motions of the earth. None of them know how much stronger than any Atlas is the power of the best. But this “best” is still undiscovered; and in inquiring after the cause, we can only hope to attain the second best.

Now there is a danger in the contemplation of the nature of things, as there is a danger in looking at the sun during an eclipse, unless the precaution is taken of looking only at the image reflected in the water, or in a glass. And I was afraid, says Socrates, that I might injure the eye of the soul. I thought that I had better return to the old and safe method of ideas. Though I do not mean to say that he who contemplates existence through the medium of ideas sees only through a glass darkly, any more than he who contemplates actual effects.

If the existence of ideas is granted to him, Socrates is of opinion that he will then have no difficulty in proving the immortality of the soul. He will only ask for a further admission: that beauty is the cause of the beautiful, greatness the cause of the great, smallness of the small, and so on of other things. Thus he avoids the contradictions of greater and less (greater by reason of that which is smaller!), of addition and subtraction, and the other difficulties of relation. These subtleties he is for leaving to wiser heads than his own; he prefers to test ideas by their consequences, and, if asked to give an account of them, goes back to some higher idea or hypothesis



which appears to him to be the best, until at last he arrives at a resting-place.

The doctrine of ideas, which has long ago received the assent of the Socratic circle, is now affirmed by the Phliasian auditor to command the assent of any men of sense. The narrative is continued; Socrates is desirous of explaining how opposite ideas may appear to coexist but not really coexist in the same thing or person. For example, Simmias may be said to have greatness and also smallness, because he is greater than Socrates and less than Phædo. And yet Simmias is not really great and also small, but only when compared to Phædo and Socrates. I use the illustration, says Socrates, because I want to show you not only that ideal opposites exclude one another, but also the opposites in us. I, for example, having the attribute of smallness remain small, and cannot become great: the smallness in me drives out greatness.

One of the company here remarked that this was inconsistent with the old assertion that opposites generated opposites. But that, replies Socrates, was affirmed, not of opposite ideas either in us or in nature, but of opposite things—not of life and death, but of individuals living and dying. When this objection has been removed, Socrates proceeds: This doctrine of the mutual exclusion of opposites is not only true of the opposites themselves, but of things which are inseparable from them. For example, cold and heat are opposed; and fire, which is inseparable from heat, cannot coexist with cold, or snow, which is inseparable from cold, with heat. Again, the number three excludes the number four, because three is an odd number and four is an even number, and the odd is opposed to the even. Thus we are able to proceed a step beyond "the safe and simple answer." We may say, not only that the odd excludes the even, but that the number three, which participates in oddness, excludes the even. And in like manner, not only does life exclude death, but the soul, of which life is the inseparable attribute, also excludes death. And that of which life is the inseparable attribute is by the force of the terms imperishable. If the odd principle were imperishable, then the number three would not perish, but remove on the approach of the even principle. But the immortal is imperish-

able; and therefore the soul on the approach of death does not perish but removes.

Thus all objections appear to be finally silenced. And now the application has to be made: If the soul is immortal, "What manner of persons ought we to be?" having regard not only to time but to eternity. For death is not the end of all, and the wicked is not released from his evil by death; but every one carries with him into the world below that which he is and that which he becomes, and that only.

For after death the soul is carried away to judgment, and when she has received her punishment returns to earth in the course of ages. The wise soul is conscious of her situation, and follows the attendant angel who guides her through the windings of the world below; but the impure soul wanders hither and thither without a guide, and is carried at last to her own place, as the pure soul is also carried away to hers. "In order that you may understand this, I must first describe to you the nature and conformation of the earth."

Now the whole earth is a globe placed in the center of the heavens, and is maintained there by the perfection of balance. That which we call the earth is only a small hollow, of which there are many; but the true earth is above, and is a finer and subtler element, and is full of precious stones and bright colors, of which the stones and colors in our earth are but fragments and reflections, and the earth itself is corroded and crusted over just as the shore is by the sea. And if, like birds, we could fly to the surface of the air, in the same manner that fishes come to the top of the sea, then we should behold the true earth and the true heaven and the true stars. This heavenly earth is of divers colors, sparkling with jewels brighter than gold and whiter than any snow, having flowers and fruits innumerable. And the inhabitants dwell, some on the shore of the sea of air, others in "islets of the blest," and they hold converse with the gods, and behold the sun, moon, and stars as they truly are, and their other blessedness is of a piece with this.

But the interior of the earth has other and deeper hollows, and one huge chasm or opening called Tartarus, into which vast streams of water and fire are ever flowing to and fro, of which small portions find their way to the surface and form

seas and rivers and volcanoes. There is a perpetual inhalation and exhalation of the air rising and falling as the waters pass into the depths of the earth and return again, in their course forming lakes and rivers, but never descending below the center of the earth, the opposite side of which is a precipice to the rivers on both sides. These rivers are many and mighty, and there are four principal ones, Oceanus, Acheron, Pyriphlegethon, and Cocytus. Oceanus is the river which encircles the earth; Acheron takes an opposite direction, and after flowing under the earth and in desert places at last reaches the Acherusian lake, and this is the river at which the dead await their return to earth. Pyriphlegethon is a stream of fire, which coils around the earth and flows into the depths of Tartarus. The fourth river (Cocytus) is that which is called by the poets the Stygian river, and falls into, and forms the lake Styx, receiving strange powers in the waters. This river, too, falls into Tartarus.

The dead are first of all judged according to their deeds, and those who are incurable are thrust into Tartarus, from which they never come out. Those who have only committed venial sins are first purified of them, and then rewarded for the good which they have done. Those who have committed crimes, great indeed, but not unpardonable, are thrust into Tartarus, but are cast forth at the end of the year on the shores of the rivers, where they stand crying to their victims to let them come out, and if they prevail, then they are let out and their sufferings cease; if not, they are borne in a ceaseless whirl along the rivers of Tartarus. The pure souls also receive their reward, and have their abode in the upper earth, and a select few in still fairer "mansions."

Socrates is not prepared to insist on the literal accuracy of this description, but he is confident that something of the kind is true. He who has sought after the pleasures of knowledge and rejected the pleasures of the body has reason to be of good hope at the approach of death, whose voice is already heard calling to him, and will be heard calling by all men.

The hour has come at which he must drink the poison, and not much remains to be done. How shall they bury him? That is a question which he refuses to entertain, for they are

not burying him, but his dead body. His friends had once been sureties that he would remain, and they shall now be sureties that he has run away. Yet he would not die without the customary ceremonies of washing and burial. Shall he make a libation of the poison? In the spirit he will, but not in the letter. One request he utters in the very act of death, which has been a puzzle to after-ages. The puzzle has been occasioned by the simplicity of his words, for there is no reason to suppose that they have any hidden meaning. With a sort of irony he remembers that a trifling religious duty is still unfulfilled, just as above he is represented as desirous before he departs to make a few verses in order to satisfy a scruple about the meaning of a dream.

1. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul has such a great interest for all mankind that they are apt to rebel against any examination of the nature of their belief. They do not like to acknowledge that this, as well as the other "eternal ideas" of man, has a history in time, which may be traced in Greek poetry or philosophy, and also in the Hebrew Scriptures. They convert feeling into reasoning, and throw a network of dialectics over that which is really a deeply-rooted instinct. In the same temper which Socrates reproves in himself they are disposed to think that even bad arguments will do no harm, for they will die with them, and while they live they will gain by the delusion. But there is a better and higher spirit to be gathered from the "Phædo," as well as from the other writings of Plato, which says that first principles should be most constantly reviewed, and that the highest subjects demand of us the greatest accuracy.

2. Modern philosophy is perplexed at this whole question, which is sometimes fairly given up and handed over to the realm of faith. The perplexity should not be forgotten by us when we attempt to submit the "Phædo" of Plato to the requirements of logic. For what idea can we form of the soul when separated from the body? Or how can the soul be united with the body and still be independent? Is the soul related to the body as the ideal to the real, or as the whole to the parts, or as the subject to the object, or as the cause to the effect, or as the end to the means? Shall we say with



Aristotle, that the soul is the entelechy or form of an organized living body? or with Plato, that she has a life of her own? Is the Pythagorean image of the harmony, or of the monad, the truer expression? Is the soul related to the body as sight to the eye, or as the boatman to his boat? And in another state of being is the soul to be conceived of as vanishing into infinity, hardly possessing an existence which she can call her own, as in the pantheistic system of Spinoza and others? or as an individual spirit informed with another body and retaining the impress of her former character? Or is the opposition of soul and body a mere illusion, and the true self neither soul nor body, but the union of the two in the "I" which is above them? And is death the assertion of this individuality in the higher nature, and the falling away into nothingness of the lower? Or are we vainly attempting to pass the boundaries of human thought? The body and the soul seem to be inseparable, not only in fact, but in our conceptions of them; and any philosophy which too closely unites them, or too widely separates them, either in this life or in another, disturbs the balance of human nature. Neither Plato nor any other philosopher has perfectly adjusted them, or been perfectly consistent with himself in describing their relation to one another.

3. Again, believing in the immortality of the soul, we must still ask the question of Socrates, "What is that which we suppose to be immortal?" Is it the personal and individual element in us, or the spiritual and universal? Is it the principle of knowledge or of goodness, or the union of the two? Is it the mere force of life which is determined to be, or the consciousness of self which cannot be got rid of, or the fire of genius which refuses to be extinguished? Or is there a hidden being which is allied to the Author of all existence, who is because he is perfect, and to whom our ideas of perfection give us a title to belong? Whatever answer is given by us to these questions, there still remains the necessity of allowing the permanence of evil, if not forever, at any rate for a time, in order that the wicked "may not have too good a bargain." For the annihilation of evil at death, or the eternal duration of it, seem to involve equal difficulties in the moral order of the universe. Sometimes we are led by our feelings,



rather than by our reason, to think of the good and wise only as existing in another life. Why should the mean, the weak, the idiot, the infant, the herd of men who have never in any proper sense the use of reason, reappear with blinking eyes in the light of another world? But our second thought is that the hope of humanity is a common one, and that all or none have a right to immortality. Reason does not allow us to suppose that we have any greater claims than others, and experience sometimes reveals to us unexpected flashes of the higher nature in those whom we had despised. Such are some of the distracting thoughts which press upon us when we attempt to assign any form to our conceptions of a future state.

4. Again, ideas must be given through something; and we are always prone to argue about the soul from analogies of outward things which may serve to embody our thoughts, but are also partly delusive. For we cannot reason from the natural to the spiritual, or from the outward to the inward. The progress of physiological science, without bringing us nearer to the great secret, has perhaps tended to remove some erroneous notions respecting the relations of body and mind, and in this we have the advantage of the ancients. But no one imagines that any seed of immortality is to be discerned in our mortal frames. The result seems to be that those who have thought most deeply on the immortality of the soul have been content to rest their belief on the agreement of the more enlightened part of mankind, and on the inseparable connection of such a doctrine with the existence of a God, and our ideas of divine justice—also in a less degree on the impossibility of thinking otherwise of those whom we reverence in this world. And after all has been said, the figure, the analogy, the argument, are felt to be only approximations in different forms to the expression of the common sentiment of the human heart.

5. The "Phædo" of Plato may also be regarded as a dialectical approximation to the truth of immortality. Beginning in mystery, Socrates, in the intermediate part of the dialogue, attempts to bring the doctrine of a future life into connection with his theory of knowledge. In proportion as he succeeds in this, the individual seems to disappear in a more general notion of the soul; the contemplation of ideas "under

the form of eternity" takes the place of past and future states of existence. His language may be compared to that of some modern philosophers, who speak of eternity, not in the sense of perpetual duration of time, but as an ever-present quality of the soul. Yet at the conclusion of the dialogue, having "arrived at the end of the intellectual world," he replaces the veil of mythology, and describes the soul and her attendant genius in the language of the mysteries or of a disciple of Zoroaster. Nor can we fairly demand of Plato a consistency which is wanting among ourselves, who acknowledge that another world is beyond the range of human thought, and yet are always seeking to represent the mansions of heaven or hell in the colors of the painter, or in the descriptions of the poet or rhetorician.

6. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul was not new to the Greeks in the age of Socrates, but, like the unity of God, had a foundation in the popular belief. The old Homeric notion of a gibbering ghost flitting away to Hades; or of a few illustrious heroes enjoying the islets of the blest; or of an existence divided between the two; or the Hesiodic, of righteous spirits, who become guardian angels,—had given place in the mysteries and the Orphic poets to representations, partly fanciful, of a future state of rewards and punishments. The reticence of the Greeks on public occasions and in some part of their literature respecting this "underground" religion is not to be taken as a measure of the diffusion of such beliefs. If Pericles in the funeral oration is silent on the consolations of immortality, the poet Pindar and the tragedians on the other hand constantly assume the continued existence of the dead in an upper or under world. Darius and Laius are still alive; Antigone will be dear to her brethren after death; the way to the palace of Cronos is found by those who "have thrice departed from evil." The tragedy of the Greeks is not "rounded" by this life, but is deeply set in decrees of fate and mysterious workings of powers beneath the earth. In the caricature of Aristophanes there is also a witness to the common sentiment. The Ionian and Pythagorean philosophies arose, and some new elements were added to the popular belief. The individual must find an expression as well as the world. Either the soul was supposed to exist in the form of a magnet or of a

particle of fire, or light, or air, or water; or of a number or of a harmony of number; or to be or have, like the stars, a principle of motion. At length Anaxagoras, hardly distinguishing between life and mind, or between mind human and divine, attained the pure abstraction; and this, like the other abstractions of Greek philosophy, sank deep into the human intelligence. The opposition of the intelligible and the sensible, and of God to the world, supplied an analogy which assisted in the separation of soul and body. If ideas were separable from phenomena, mind was also separable from matter; if the ideas were eternal, the mind that conceived them was eternal too. As the unity of God was more distinctly acknowledged, the conception of the human soul became more developed. The succession, or alternation of life and death, had occurred to Heracleitus. The Eleatic Parmenides had stumbled upon the modern thesis that "thought and being are the same." The eastern belief in transmigration defined the sense of individuality; and some, like Empedocles, fancied that the blood which they had shed in another state of being was crying against them, and that for thirty thousand years they were to be "fugitives and vagabonds upon the earth." The desire of recognizing a lost love or friend in the world below is a natural feeling which, in that age as well as in every other, has given distinctness to the hope of immortality. Nor were ethical considerations wanting, partly derived from the necessity of punishing the greater sort of criminals, whom no avenging power of this world could reach. The voice of conscience, too, was heard reminding the good man that he was not altogether innocent. To these indistinct longings and fears an expression was given in the mysteries and Orphic poets: a "heap of books," passing under the names of Musæus and Orpheus in Plato's time, were filled with notions of an underworld.

7. Yet probably the belief in the individuality of the soul after death had but a feeble hold on the Greek mind. Like the personality of God, the personality of man in a future state was not inseparably bound up with the reality of his existence. For the distinction between the personal and impersonal, and also between the divine and human, was far less marked to the Greek than to ourselves. And as Plato readily passes from

the notion of the good to that of God, he also passes, almost imperceptibly to himself and his reader, from the future life of the individual soul to the eternal being of the absolute soul. There has been a clearer statement and a clearer denial of the belief in modern times than is found in early Greek philosophy, and hence the comparative silence on the whole subject which is often remarked in ancient writers, and particularly in Aristotle. For Plato and Aristotle are not further removed in their teaching about the immortality of the soul than they are in their theory of knowledge.

8. That in an age when logic was beginning to mold human thought Plato should have cast his belief in immortality into a logical form, is not surprising. And when we consider how much the doctrine of ideas was also one of words, we cannot wonder that he should have fallen into verbal fallacies: early logic is always mistaking the truth of the form for the truth of the matter. It is easy to see that the alternation of opposites is not the same as the generation of them out of each other; and that the generation out of each other, which is the first argument in the "Phædo," is at variance with their mutual exclusion of each other, whether in themselves or in us, which is the last. For even if we admit the distinction which he draws between the opposites and the things which have the opposites, still individuals fall under the latter class; and we have to pass out of the region of human hopes and fears to a conception of an abstract soul which is the impersonation of the ideas. Such a conception, which in Plato himself is but half expressed, is unmeaning to us, and relative only to a particular stage in the history of thought. The doctrine of reminiscence is also a fragment of a former world, which has no place in the philosophy of modern times. But Plato had the wonders of psychology just opening to him, and he had not the explanation of them which is supplied by the analysis of language and the history of the human mind. The question, "Whence come our abstract ideas?" he could only answer by an imaginary hypothesis. Nor is it difficult to see that his crowning argument is purely verbal, and is but the expression of an instinctive confidence put into a logical form: "The soul is immortal because it contains a principle of imperishable-



ness." Nor does he himself seem at all to be aware that nothing is added to human knowledge by his "safe and simple answer," that beauty is the cause of the beautiful; and that he is merely reasserting the Eleatic being "divided by the Pythagorean numbers," against the Heracleitean doctrine of perpetual generation. The answer to the "very serious question" of generation and destruction is really the denial of them. For this he would substitute a system of ideas, tested not by experience, but by their consequences, and not explained by actual causes, but by a higher, that is, more general, notion: consistency with themselves is all that is required of them.

9. To deal fairly with such arguments they should not only not be separated from the age to which they belong, but they should be translated as far as possible into their modern equivalents. "If the ideas of men are eternal, their souls are eternal, and if not the ideas, then not the souls." Such an argument stands nearly in the same relation to Plato and his age as the argument from the existence of God to immortality among ourselves. "If God exists, then the soul exists after death; and if there is no God, there is no existence of the soul after death." For the ideas are to his mind the reality, the truth, the principle of permanence, as well as of mind and order in the world. When Simmias and Cebes say that they are more strongly persuaded of the existence of ideas than they are of the immortality of the soul, they represent fairly enough the order of thought in Greek philosophy. And we might say in the same way that we are more certain of the existence of God than we are of the immortality of the soul, and are led by the belief in the one to a belief in the other. The parallel, as Socrates would say, is not perfect, but agrees in as far as the mind in either case is regarded as dependent on something above and beyond herself. Nor need we shrink from pressing the analogy one step further: "We are more certain of our ideas of truth and right than we are of the existence of God, and are led on in the order of thought from one to the other."

10. The main argument of the "Phædo" is derived from the existence of eternal ideas of which the soul is a partaker; the other argument of the alternation of opposites is replaced by this. And there have not been wanting philosophers of



the idealist school who have imagined that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is a theory of knowledge only, and that in all that precedes Plato is preparing for this. Such a view is far from lying on the surface of the "Phædo," and seems to be inconsistent with the "Gorgias" and the "Republic." Those who maintain it are immediately compelled to renounce the shadow which they have grasped, as a play of words only. But the truth is that Plato in his argument for the immortality of the soul has collected many elements of proof or persuasion, ethical and mythological as well as dialectical, which are not easily to be reconciled with one another; and he is as much in earnest about his doctrine of retribution, which is repeated in all his more ethical writings, as about his theory of knowledge. And while we may fairly translate the dialectical into the language of Hegel, and the religious and mythological into the language of Dante or Bunyan, the ethical speaks to us still in the same voice, reaching across the ages.

11. Two arguments of this sort occur in the "Phædo." The first may be described as the aspiration of the soul after another sort of being. Like the Oriental or Christian ascetic, the philosopher is seeking to withdraw from impurities of sense, to leave the world and the things of the world, and to find his higher self. Plato recognizes in these aspirations the foretaste of immortality, as Butler and Addison in modern times have argued, the one from the moral tendencies of mankind, the other from the progress of the soul towards perfection. In using this argument Plato has certainly confused the soul which has left the body with the soul of the good and wise. Such a confusion was natural, and arose partly out of the antithesis of soul and body. The soul in her own essence, and the soul "clothed upon" with virtues and graces, were easily interchanged with one another, because on a subject which passes expression distinctions of language can hardly be maintained.

12. The other ethical proof of the immortality of the soul is derived from the necessity of retribution. The wicked would be too well off if their evil deeds came to an end. It is not to be supposed that an Ardiæus, an Archelaus, an Ismenias, could ever have suffered the penalty of their crimes in this world. The manner in which this retribution is accomplished Plato

represents under the figure of mythology. Doubtless he felt that it was easier to improve than to invent, and that in religion especially the traditional form was required in order to give verisimilitude to the myth. The myth too is far more probable to that age than to ours, and may fairly be regarded as "one guess among many" about the nature of the earth, which he cleverly supports by the indications of geology. Not that he insists on the absolute truth of his own particular notions: "no man of sense will be confident of that; but he will be confident that something of the kind is true." As in other passages he wins belief for his fictions by the moderation of his statements; he does not, like Dante or Swedenborg, allow himself to be deceived by his own creations.

The dialogue must be read in the light of the situation. And first of all we are struck by the calmness of the scene. Like the spectators at the time, we cannot pity Socrates, his mien and his language are so noble and fearless. He is the same as he ever was, but milder and gentler, and he has in no degree lost his interest in dialectics; the argument is the greatest gain to him, and he will not forego the delight of it in compliance with the jailer's intimation that he should not heat himself with talking. Some other traits of his character may be noted; for example, the courteous manner in which he inclines his head to the last objector, or the ironical touch, "Me already, as the tragic poet would say, the voice of fate calls"; or the depreciation of the arguments with which "he comforted himself and them"; or the allusion to the possibility of finding another teacher among barbarous races; or the mysterious reference to another science (mathematics?) of generation and destruction for which he is vainly feeling. There is no change in him; only now he is invested with a sort of sacred character, as the prophet or priest of Apollo the god of the festival, in whose honor he first of all composes a hymn, and then like the swan pours forth his dying lay. Perhaps the extreme elevation of Socrates above his own situation, and the ordinary interests of life (compare his *jeu d'esprit* about his burial) create in the mind of the reader an impression stronger than could be derived from arguments that such a one, in his own language has in him "a principle which

does not admit of death." The other persons of the dialogue may be considered under two heads: private friends, and the respondents in the argument.

First there is Crito; he is the equal in years of Socrates, and stands in quite a different relation to him from his younger disciples. He is a man of the world who is rich and prosperous, the best friend of Socrates, who wants to know his last commands, in whose presence he talks to his family, and who performs the last duty of closing his eyes. It is observable, too, that, as in the "Euthydemus," Crito shows no aptitude for philosophical discussions. Nor among the friends of Socrates must the jailer be forgotten, who seems to have been introduced by Plato in order to show the impression made by the extraordinary man on the common. The gentle nature of the man is indicated by his weeping at the announcement of his errand and then turning away, and also by the words of Socrates to his disciples: "How charming the man is! since I have been in prison he was always coming to me, and has been as good as could be to me." We are reminded too that he has retained this gentle nature amid scenes of death and violence by the contrasts which he draws between the behavior of Socrates and of others when about to die.

Another person who takes no part in the philosophical discussion is the excitable Apollodorus, who testifies his grief by the most violent emotions. Phædo is also present, the "beloved disciple" as he may be termed, who is described, if not "leaning on his bosom," as seated next to Socrates, who is playing with his hair. At a particular point the argument is described as falling before the attack of Simmias. A sort of despair is introduced in the minds of the company. The effect of this is heightened by the description of Phædo, who has been the eye-witness of the scene, and by the sympathy of his Phliasian auditors, who are beginning to think "that they too can never trust an argument again." Like Apollodorus, Phædo himself takes no part in the argument. But the calmness of his behavior, "veiling his face" when he can no longer contain his tears, contrasts with the passionate cries of the other.

The two principal interlocutors are Simmias and Cebes, the disciples of Philolaus the Pythagorean philosopher of Thebes.

Simmias is described in the "Phædrus" as fonder of an argument than any man living; and Cebes, although finally persuaded by Socrates, is said to be the most incredulous of human beings. It is Cebes who at the commencement of the dialogue raises the question why "suicide is unlawful," and who first supplies the doctrine of recollection as confirming the pre-existence of the soul. It is Cebes who urges that the pre-existence does not necessarily involve the future existence of the soul, and who brings forward the argument of the weaver and his coat. To Simmias, on the other hand, is attributed the notion that the soul is a harmony, which is naturally put into the mouth of a Pythagorean disciple. It is Simmias, too, who first remarks on the uncertainty of human knowledge, and only at last concedes to the argument such a qualified approval as is consistent with the feebleness of the human faculties.

There is no proof that the dialogue was ever actually held, and its place in the series is doubtful. The doctrine of ideas is certainly carried beyond the Socratic point of view; in no other of the writings of Plato is the theory of them so completely developed. Whether the belief in immortality can be attributed to Socrates or not is uncertain; the silence of the "Memorabilia," and of the earlier dialogues of Plato, is an argument to the contrary. Yet in the "Cyropædia" Xenophon has put language into the mouth of the dying Cyrus which recalls the "Phædo," and may perhaps have been derived from the teaching of Socrates.

Dramatic elements may be noted in all the dialogues of Plato. "Phædo" is a tragedy; Socrates is the protagonist and Simmias and Cebes are secondary performers. No dialogue has greater unity of subject and feeling. Plato has certainly fulfilled the condition of Greek, or rather all, art, which requires that scenes of death and suffering be clothed in beauty. The gathering of the friends at the beginning, the dejection of the audience at the temporary overthrow of the argument, the picture of Socrates playing with the hair of Phædo, the final scene, in which Socrates alone retains his composure—are masterpieces of art. The chorus at the end might have interpreted the feeling of the play: "There can no evil happen to a good man in life or death."



# PHÆDO

## PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE

PHÆDO, *who is the narrator of  
the dialogue to* ECHECRATES  
*of Phlius*  
SOCRATES.

APOLLODORUS  
SIMMIAS  
CEBES  
CRITO

ATTENDANT OF THE PRISON

SCENE:—The Prison of Socrates

PLACE OF THE NARRATION:—Phlius

*Echecrates.*

WERE you yourself, Phædo, in the prison with Socrates on the day when he drank the poison?

*Phædo.* Yes, Echecrates, I was.

*Ech.* I wish that you would tell me about his death. What did he say in his last hours? We were informed that he died by taking poison, but no one knew anything more; for no Phliasian ever goes to Athens now, and a long time has elapsed since any Athenian found his way to Phlius, and therefore we had no clear account.

*Phæd.* Did you not hear of the proceedings at the trial?

*Ech.* Yes; some one told us about the trial, and we could not understand why, having been condemned, he was put to death, as appeared, not at the time, but long afterwards. What was the reason of this?

*Phæd.* An accident, Echecrates. The reason was that the stern of the ship which the Athenians send to Delos happened to have been crowned on the day before he was tried.

*Ech.* What is this ship?

*Phæd.* This is the ship in which, as the Athenians say, Theseus went to Crete when he took with him the fourteen youths, and was the savior of them and of himself. And they were said to have vowed to Apollo at the time, that if they were saved they would make an annual pilgrimage to Delos. Now this custom still continues, and the whole period of the voyage



to and from Delos, beginning when the priest of Apollo crowns the stern of the ship, is a holy season, during which the city is not allowed to be polluted by public executions; and often, when the vessel is detained by adverse winds, there may be a very considerable delay. As I was saying, the ship was crowned on the day before the trial, and this was the reason why Socrates lay in prison and was not put to death until long after he was condemned.

*Ech.* What was the manner of his death, Phædo? What was said or done? And which of his friends had he with him? Or were they not allowed by the authorities to be present? And did he die alone?

*Phæd.* No; there were several of his friends with him.

*Ech.* If you have nothing to do, I wish that you would tell me what passed, as exactly as you can.

*Phæd.* I have nothing to do, and will try to gratify your wish. For to me too there is no greater pleasure than to have Socrates brought to my recollection, whether I speak myself or hear another speak of him.

*Ech.* You will have listeners who are of the same mind with you, and I hope that you will be as exact as you can.

*Phæd.* I remember the strange feeling which came over me at being with him. For I could hardly believe that I was present at the death of a friend, and therefore I did not pity him, Echecrates; his mien and his language were so noble and fearless in the hour of death that to me he appeared blessed. I thought that in going to the other world he could not be without a divine call, and that he would be happy, if any man ever was, when he arrived there; and therefore I did not pity him as might seem natural at such a time. But neither could I feel the pleasure which I usually felt in philosophical discourse (for philosophy was the theme of which we spoke). I was pleased, and I was also pained, because I knew that he was soon to die, and this strange mixture of feeling was shared by us all; we were laughing and weeping by turns, especially the excitable Apollodorus—you know the sort of man?

*Ech.* Yes.

*Phæd.* He was quite overcome; and I myself, and all of us were greatly moved.

*Ech.* Who were present?

*Phæd.* Of native Athenians there were, besides Apollodorus, Critobulus and his father Crito, Hermogenes, Epigenes, Æschines, and Antisthenes; likewise Ctesippus of the deme of Pæania, Menexenus, and some others; but Plato, if I am not mistaken, was ill.

*Ech.* Were there any strangers?

*Phæd.* Yes, there were; Simmias, the Theban, and Cebes, and Phædonides; Euclid and Terpison, who came from Megara.

*Ech.* And was Aristippus there, and Cleombrotus?

*Phæd.* No, they were said to be in Ægina.<sup>1</sup>

*Ech.* Any one else?

*Phæd.* I think that these were about all.

*Ech.* And what was the discourse of which you spoke?

*Phæd.* I will begin at the beginning, and endeavor to repeat the entire conversation. You must understand that we had been previously in the habit of assembling early in the morning at the court in which the trial was held, and which is not far from the prison. There we remained talking with one another until the opening of the prison doors (for they were not opened very early), and then went in and generally passed the day with Socrates. On the last morning the meeting was earlier than usual; this was owing to our having heard on the previous evening that the sacred ship had arrived from Delos, and therefore we agreed to meet very early at the accustomed place. On our going to the prison, the jailer who answered the door, instead of admitting us, came out and bade us wait and he would call us. "For the eleven [police commissioners]," he said, "are now with Socrates; they are taking off his chains, and giving orders that he is to die to-day." He soon returned and said that we might come in. On entering we found Socrates just released from chains, and Xanthippe,<sup>2</sup> whom you know,

<sup>1</sup> Plato implicitly censures these disciples for not being present although so near, Ægina being but twenty miles from Athens. Cicero says that Cleombrotus, after reading this dialogue, was so overcome by remorse that he killed himself by throwing himself into the sea.

<sup>2</sup> The wife of Socrates. Though a shrew, she was at heart a good wife and mother. Xenophon relates that on Socrates' son complain-

sitting by him, and holding his child in her arms. When she saw us she uttered a cry and said, as women will: "O Socrates, this is the last time that either you will converse with your friends, or they with you." Socrates turned to Crito and said: "Crito, let some one take her home." Some of Crito's people accordingly led her away, crying out and beating herself. And when she was gone, Socrates, sitting up on the couch, began to bend and rub his leg, saying, as he rubbed: How singular is the thing called pleasure, and how curiously related to pain, which might be thought to be the opposite of it; for they never come to a man together, and yet he who pursues either of them is generally compelled to take the other. They are two, and yet they grow together out of one head or stem; and I cannot help thinking that if Æsop had noticed them, he would have made a fable about God trying to reconcile their strife, and when he could not, he fastened their heads together; and this is the reason why when one comes the other follows, as I find in my own case pleasure comes following after the pain in my leg which was caused by the chain.

Upon this Cebes said: I am very glad indeed, Socrates, that you mentioned the name of Æsop. For that reminds me of a question which has been asked by others, and was asked of me only the day before yesterday by Evenus the poet, and as he will be sure to ask again, you may as well tell me what I should say to him, if you would like him to have an answer. He wanted to know why you who never before wrote a line of poetry, now that you are in prison are putting Æsop into verse, and also composing that hymn in honor of Apollo.

Tell him, Cebes, he replied, that I had no idea of rivaling him or his poems; which is the truth, for I knew that I could not do that. But I wanted to see whether I could purge away a scruple which I felt about certain dreams. In the course of my life I have often had intimations in dreams "that I should make music." The same dream came to me sometimes in one form, and sometimes in another, but always saying the same or nearly the same words: Make and cultivate music, said the dream. And hitherto I had imagined that this was only in-  
ing to his father against his mother's severity, the philosopher reasoned with him, reminding him of her many acts of self sacrifice.

tended to exhort and encourage me in the study of philosophy, which has always been the pursuit of my life, and is the noblest and best of music. The dream was bidding me do what I was already doing, in the same way that the competitor in a race is bidden by the spectators to run when he is already running. But I was not certain of this, as the dream might have meant music in the popular sense of the word, and being under sentence of death, and the festival giving me a respite, I thought that I should be safer if I satisfied the scruple, and, in obedience to the dream, composed a few verses before I departed. And first I made a hymn in honor of the god of the festival, and then considering that a poet, if he is really to be a poet or maker, should not only put words together but make stories, and as I have no invention, I took some fables of Æsop, which I had ready at hand and knew, and turned them into verse. Tell Evenus this, and bid him be of good cheer; say that I would have him come after me if he be a wise man, and not tarry; and that to-day I am likely to be going, for the Athenians say that I must.

Simmias said: What a message for such a man! having been a frequent companion of his I should say that, as far as I know him, he will never take your advice unless he is obliged.

Why, said Socrates. Is not Evenus a philosopher?

I think that he is, said Simmias.

Then he, or any man who has the spirit of philosophy, will be willing to die, though he will not take his own life, for that is held not to be right.

soudtuo Ithiso ". fiojIwonnateP hhrdlu hrdlu hrdluhrdthe

Here he changed his position, and put his legs off the couch on to the ground, and during the rest of the conversation he remained sitting.

Why do you say, inquired Cebes, that a man ought not to take his own life, but that the philosopher will be ready to follow the dying?

Socrates replied: And have you, Cebes and Simmias, who are acquainted with Philolaus, never heard him speak of this?

I never understood him, Socrates. .

My words, too, are only an echo; but I am very willing to say what I have heard: and indeed, as I am going to another



place, I ought to be thinking and talking of the nature of the pilgrimage which I am about to make. What can I do better in the interval between this and the setting of the sun?<sup>1</sup>

Then tell me, Socrates, why is suicide held not to be right? as I have certainly heard Philolaus affirm when he was staying with us at Thebes: and there are others who say the same, although none of them has ever made me understand him. But do your best, replied Socrates, and the day may come when you will understand. I suppose that you wonder why, as most things which are evil may be accidentally good, this is to be the only exception (for may not death, too, be better than life in some cases?), and why, when a man is better dead, he is not permitted to be his own benefactor, but must wait for the hand of another.

By Jupiter! yes, indeed, said Cebes, laughing, and speaking in his native Doric.

I admit the appearance of inconsistency, replied Socrates, but there may not be any real inconsistency after all in this. There is a doctrine uttered in secret<sup>2</sup> that man is a prisoner who has no right to open the door of his prison and run away; this is a great mystery which I do not quite understand. Yet I too believe that the gods are our guardians, and that we are a possession of theirs. Do you not agree?

Yes, I agree to that, said Cebes.

And if one of your own possessions, an ox or an ass, for example, took the liberty of putting himself out of the way when you had given no intimation of your wish that he should die, would you not be angry with him, and would you not punish him if you could?

Certainly, replied Cebes.

Then there may be reason in saying that a man should wait, and not take his own life until God summons him, as he is now summoning me.

Yes, Socrates, said Cebes, there is surely reason in that. And yet how can you reconcile this seemingly true belief that

<sup>1</sup> By Athenian law executions took place after sunset.

<sup>2</sup> Probably by the Pythagorean mystics.



God is our guardian and we his possessions, with that willingness to die which we were attributing to the philosopher? That the wisest of men should be willing to leave this service in which they are ruled by the gods who are the best of rulers, is not reasonable, for surely no wise man thinks that when set at liberty he can take better care of himself than the gods take of him. A fool may perhaps think this—he may argue that he had better run away from his master, not considering that his duty is to remain to the end, and not to run away from the good, and that there is no sense in his running away. But the wise man will want to be ever with him who is better than himself. Now this, Socrates, is the reverse of what was just now said; for upon this view the wise man should sorrow and the fool rejoice at passing out of life.

The earnestness of Cebes seemed to please Socrates. Here, said he, turning to us, is a man who is always inquiring, and is not to be convinced all in a moment, nor by every argument.

And in this case, added Simmias, his objection does appear to me to have some force. For what can be the meaning of a truly wise man wanting to fly away and lightly leave a master who is better than himself? And I rather imagine that Cebes is referring to you; he thinks that you are too ready to leave us, and too ready to leave the gods who, as you acknowledge, are our good rulers.

Yes, replied Socrates; there is reason in that. And this indictment you think that I ought to answer as if I were in court?

That is what we should like, said Simmias.

Then I must try to make a better impression upon you than I did when defending myself before the judges. For I am quite ready to acknowledge, Simmias and Cebes, that I ought to be grieved at death, if I were not persuaded that I am going to other gods who are wise and good (of this I am as certain as I can be of anything of the sort) and to men departed (though I am not so certain of this), who are better than those whom I leave behind; and therefore I do not grieve as I might have done, for I have good hope that there is yet something remaining for the dead, and as has been said of old, some far better thing for the good than for the evil.

But do you mean to take away your thoughts with you, Socrates? said Simmias. Will you not communicate them to us?—the benefit is one in which we too may hope to share. Moreover, if you succeed in convincing us, that will be an answer to the charge against yourself.

I will do my best, replied Socrates. But you must first let me hear what Crito wants; he was going to say something to me.

Only this, Socrates, replied Crito: the attendant who is to give you the poison has been telling me that you are not to talk much, and he wants me to let you know this; for that by talking, heat is increased, and this interferes with the action of the poison; those who excite themselves are sometimes obliged to drink the poison two or three times.

Then, said Socrates, let him mind his business and be prepared to give the poison two or three times, if necessary; that is all.

I was almost certain that you would say that, replied Crito; but I was obliged to satisfy him.

Never mind him, he said.

And now I will make answer to you, O my judges, and show that he who has lived as a true philosopher has reason to be of good cheer when he is about to die, and that after death he may hope to receive the greatest good in the other world. And how this may be, Simmias and Cebes, I will endeavor to explain. For I deem that the true disciple of philosophy is likely to be misunderstood by other men; they do not perceive that he is ever pursuing death and dying; and if this is true, why, having had the desire of death all his life long, should he repine at the arrival of that which he has been always pursuing and desiring?

Simmias laughed and said: Though not in a laughing humor, I swear that I cannot help laughing when I think what the wicked world will say when they hear this. They will say that this is very true, and our people at home will agree with them in saying that the life which philosophers desire is truly death, and that they have found them out to be deserving of the death which they desire.

And they are right, Simmias, in saying this, with the excep-

tion of the words "They have found them out"; for they have not found out what is the nature of this death which the true philosopher desires, or how he deserves or desires death. But let us leave them and have a word with ourselves: Do we believe that there is such a thing as death?

To be sure, replied Simmias.

And is this anything but the separation of soul and body? And being dead is the attainment of this separation when the soul exists in herself, and is parted from the body and the body is parted from the soul—that is death?

Exactly: that and nothing else, he replied.

And what do you say of another question, my friend, about which I should like to have your opinion, and the answer to which will probably throw light on our present inquiry: Do you think that the philosopher ought to care about the pleasures—if they are to be called pleasures—of eating and drinking?

Certainly not, answered Simmias.

And what do you say of the pleasures of love—should he care about them?

By no means.

And will he think much of the other ways of indulging the body,—for example, the acquisition of costly raiment, or sandals, or other adornments of the body? Instead of caring about them, does he not rather despise anything more than nature needs? What do you say?

I should say that the true philosopher would despise them.

Would you not say that he is entirely concerned with the soul and not with the body? He would like, as far as he can, to be quit of the body and turn to the soul.

That is true.

In matters of this sort philosophers, above all other men, may be observed in every sort of way to dis sever the soul from the body.

That is true.

Whereas, Simmias, the rest of the world are of opinion that a life which has no bodily pleasures and no part in them is not worth having; but that he who thinks nothing of bodily pleasures is almost as though he were dead.

That is quite true.

What again shall we say of the actual acquirement of knowledge?—is the body, if invited to share in the inquiry, a hinderer or a helper? I mean to say, have sight and hearing any truth in them? Are they not, as the poets are always telling us, inaccurate witnesses? and yet, if even they are inaccurate and indistinct, what is to be said of the other senses?—for you will allow that they are the best of them?

Certainly, he replied.

Then when does the soul attain truth?—for in attempting to consider anything in company with the body she is obviously deceived.

Yes, that is true.

Then must not existence be revealed to her in thought, if at all?

Yes.

And thought is best when the mind is gathered into herself and none of these things trouble her,—neither sounds nor sights nor pain nor any pleasure,—when she has as little as possible to do with the body, and has no bodily sense or feeling, but is aspiring after being?

That is true.

And in this the philosopher dishonors the body; his soul runs away from the body and desires to be alone and by herself?

That is true.

Well, but there is another thing, Simmias: Is there or is there not an absolute justice?

Assuredly there is.

And an absolute beauty and absolute good?

Of course.

But did you ever behold any of them with your eyes?

Certainly not.

Or did you ever reach them with any other bodily sense? (and I speak not of these alone, but of absolute greatness, and health, and strength, and of the essence or true nature of everything). Has the reality of them ever been perceived by you through the bodily organs? or rather, is not the nearest approach to the knowledge of their several natures made



by him who so orders his intellectual vision as to have the most exact conception of the essence of that which he considers?

Certainly.

And he attains to the knowledge of them in their highest purity who goes to each of them with the mind alone, not allowing when in the act of thought the intrusion or introduction of sight or any other sense in the company of reason, but with the very light of the mind in her clearness penetrates into the very light of truth in each; he has got rid, as far as he can, of eyes and ears and of the whole body, which he conceives of only as a disturbing element, hindering the soul from the acquisition of knowledge when in company with her—is not this the sort of man who, if ever man did, is likely to attain the knowledge of existence?

There is admirable truth in that, Socrates, replied Simmias.

And when they consider all this, must not true philosophers make a reflection, of which they will speak to one another in such words as these: We have found, they will say, a path of speculation which seems to bring us and the argument to the conclusion that while we are in the body, and while the soul is mingled with this mass of evil, our desire will not be satisfied, and our desire is of the truth. For the body is a source of endless trouble to us by reason of the mere requirement of food; and also is liable to diseases which overtake and impede us in the search after truth: and by filling us so full of loves, and lusts, and fears, and fancies, and idols, and every sort of folly, prevents our ever having, as people say, so much as a thought. For whence come wars, and fightings, and factions? whence but from the body and the lusts of the body? For wars are occasioned by the love of money, and money has to be acquired for the sake and in the service of the body; and in consequence of all these things the time which ought to be given to philosophy is lost. Moreover, if there is time and an inclination toward philosophy, yet the body introduces a turmoil and confusion and fear into the course of speculation, and hinders us from seeing the truth; and all experience shows that if we would have pure knowledge of anything we must be quit of the body, and the soul in herself must behold all things



in themselves: then I suppose that we shall attain that which we desire, and of which we say that we are lovers, and that is wisdom; not while we live, but after death, as the argument shows; for if while in company with the body the soul cannot have pure knowledge, one of two things seems to follow—either knowledge is not to be attained at all, or, if at all, after death. For then, and not till then, the soul will be in herself alone and without the body. In this present life, I reckon that we make the nearest approach to knowledge when we have the least possible concern or interest in the body, and are not saturated with the bodily nature, but remain pure until the hour when God himself is pleased to release us. And then the foolishness of the body will be cleared away and we shall be pure and hold converse with other pure souls, and know of ourselves the clear light everywhere; and this is surely the light of truth. For no impure thing is allowed to approach the pure. These are the sort of words, Simmias, which the true lovers of wisdom cannot help saying to one another, and thinking. You will agree with me in that? .

Certainly, Socrates.

But if this is true, O my friend, then there is great hope that, going whither I go, I shall there be satisfied with that which has been the chief concern of you and me in our past lives. And now that the hour of departure is appointed to me, this is the hope with which I depart, and not I only, but every man who believes that he has his mind purified.

Certainly, replied Simmias.

And what is purification but the separation of the soul from the body, as I was saying before; the habit of the soul gathering and collecting herself into herself, out of all the courses of the body; the dwelling in her own place alone, as in another life, so also in this, as far as she can; the release of the soul from the chains of the body?

Very true, he said.

And what is that which is termed death, but this very separation and release of the soul from the body?

To be sure, he said.

And the true philosophers, and they only, study and are

eager to release the soul. Is not the separation and release of the soul from the body their especial study?

That is true.

And as I was saying at first, there would be a ridiculous contradiction in men studying to live as nearly as they can in a state of death, and yet repining when death comes.

Certainly.

Then, Simmias, as the true philosophers are ever studying death, to them, of all men, death is the least terrible. Look at the matter in this way: how inconsistent of them to have been always enemies of the body, and wanting to have the soul alone, and when this is granted to them, to be trembling and repining; instead of rejoicing at their departing to that place where, when they arrive, they hope to gain that which in life they loved (and this was wisdom), and at the same time to be rid of the company of their enemy. Many a man has been willing to go to the world below in the hope of seeing there an earthly love, or wife, or son, and conversing with them. And will he who is a true lover of wisdom, and is persuaded in like manner that only in the world below he can worthily enjoy her, still repine at death? Will he not depart with joy? Surely he will, my friend, if he be a true philosopher. For he will have a firm conviction that there only, and nowhere else, he can find wisdom in her purity. And if this be true, he would be very absurd, as I was saying, if he were to fear death.

He would, indeed, replied Simmias.

And when you see a man who is repining at the approach of death, is not his reluctance a sufficient proof that he is not a lover of wisdom, but a lover of the body, and probably at the same time a lover of either money or power, or both?

That is very true, he replied.

There is a virtue, Simmias, which is named courage. Is not that a special attribute of the philosopher?

Certainly.

Again, there is temperance. Is not the calm, and control, and disdain of the passions which even the many call temperance, a quality belonging only to those who despise the body and live in philosophy?

That is not to be denied.

For the courage and temperance of other men, if you will consider them, are really a contradiction.

How is that, Socrates?

Well, he said, you are aware that death is regarded by men in general as a great evil.

That is true, he said.

And do not courageous men endure death because they are afraid of yet greater evils?

That is true.

Then all but the philosophers are courageous only from fear, and because they are afraid; and yet that a man should be courageous from fear, and because he is a coward, is surely a strange thing.

Very true.

And are not the temperate exactly in the same case? They are temperate because they are intemperate,—which may seem to be a contradiction, but is nevertheless the sort of thing which happens with this foolish temperance. For there are pleasures which they must have, and are afraid of losing; and therefore they abstain from one class of pleasures because they are overcome by another: and whereas intemperance is defined as “being under the dominion of pleasure,” they overcome only because they are overcome by pleasure. And that is what I mean by saying that they are temperate through intemperance.

That appears to be true.

Yet the exchange of one fear or pleasure or pain for another fear or pleasure or pain, which are measured like coins, the greater with the less, is not the exchange of virtue. O my dear Simmias, is there not one true coin for which all things ought to exchange?—and that is wisdom; and only in exchange for this, and in company with this, is anything truly bought or sold, whether courage or temperance or justice. And is not all true virtue the companion of wisdom, no matter what fears or pleasures or other similar goods or evils may or may not attend her? But the virtue which is made up of these goods, when they are severed from wisdom and exchanged with one another, is a shadow of virtue only, nor is there any freedom or health or truth in her; but in the true exchange there is a purging away of all these things, and temperance, and

justice, and courage, and wisdom herself are a purgation of them. And I conceive that the founders of the mysteries had a real meaning and were not mere triflers when they intimated in a figure long ago that he who passed unsanctified and uninitiated into the world below will live in a slough, but that he who arrives there after initiation and purification will dwell with the gods. For "many," as they say in the mysteries, "are the thyrsus bearers, but few are the mystics,"—meaning, as I interpret the words, the true philosophers.<sup>1</sup> In the number of whom I have been seeking, according to my ability, to find a place during my whole life, whether I have sought in a right way or not, and whether I have succeeded or not, I shall truly know in a little while, if God will, when I myself arrive in the other world: that is my belief. And now, Simmias and Cebes, I have answered those who charge me with not grieving or repining at parting from you and my masters in this world; and I am right in not repining, for I believe that I shall find other masters and friends who are as good in the world below. But all men cannot receive this, and I shall be glad if my words have any more success with you than with the judges of Athenians.

Cebes answered: I agree, Socrates, in the greater part of what you say. But in what relates to the soul, men are apt to be incredulous; they fear that when she leaves the body her place may be nowhere, and that on the very day of death she may be destroyed and perish.—immediately on her release from the body, issuing forth like smoke or air and vanishing away into nothingness. For if she could only hold together and be herself after she was released from the evils of the body, there would be good reason to hope, Socrates, that what you say is true. But much persuasion and many arguments are required in order to prove that when the man is dead the soul yet exists, and has any force or intelligence.

<sup>1</sup> Dionysus had a twofold nature, an exoteric and an esoteric one. To the common people, who carried the wands (thyrsus) in his riotous routs, he was Dionysus, a god of wine and revelry. To the initiate in the mysteries, he was Zagreus, identified with the Egyptian god Osiris, and worshipped with secret rites typifying the resurrection of the dead.



True, Cebes, said Socrates; and shall I suggest that we talk a little of the probabilities of these things?

I am sure, said Cebes, that I should greatly like to know your opinion about them.

I reckon, said Socrates, that no one who heard me now, not even if he were one of my old enemies, the comic poets,<sup>1</sup> could accuse me of idle talking about matters in which I have no concern. Let us then, if you please, proceed with the inquiry.

Whether the souls of men after death are or are not in the world below, is a question which may be argued in this manner. The ancient doctrine of which I have been speaking affirms that they go from this into the other world, and return hither, and are born from the dead. Now if this be true, and the living come from the dead, then our souls must be in the other world, for if not, how could they be born again? And this would be conclusive, if there were any real evidence that the living are only born from the dead; but if there is no evidence of this, then other arguments will have to be adduced.

That is very true, replied Cebes.

Then let us consider this question, not in relation to man only, but in relation to animals generally, and to plants, and to everything of which there is generation, and the proof will be easier. Are not all things which have opposites generated out of their opposites? I mean such things as good and evil, just and unjust—and there are innumerable other opposites which are generated out of opposites. And I want to show that this holds universally of all opposites; I mean to say, for example, that anything which becomes greater must become greater after being less.

True.

And that which becomes less must have been once greater and then become less.

Yes.

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<sup>1</sup> Aristophanes, who ridiculed Socrates in his comedy *The Clouds*, and Eupolis, who said: "I hate Socrates, that prating beggar, who pays great attention, forsooth, to all these other things, but as to how withal he shall be fed, to this he gives no heed at all."



And the weaker is generated from the stronger, and the swifter from the slower.

Very true.

And the worse is from the better, and the more just is from the more unjust?

Of course.

And is this true of all opposites? and are we convinced that all of them are generated out of opposites?

Yes.

And in this universal opposition of all things, are there not also two intermediate processes which are ever going on, from one to the other, and back again; where there is a greater and a less there is also an intermediate process of increase and diminution, and that which grows is said to wax, and that which decays to wane?

Yes, he said.

And there are many other processes, such as division and composition, cooling and heating, which equally involve a passage into and out of one another. And this holds of all opposites, even though not always expressed in words—they are generated out of one another, and there is a passing or process from one to the other of them?

Very true, he replied.

Well, and is there not an opposite of life, as sleep is the opposite of waking?

True, he said.

And what is that?

Death, he answered.

And these then are generated, if they are opposites, the one from the other, and have there their two intermediate processes also?

Of course.

Now, said Socrates, I will analyze one of the two pairs of opposites which I have mentioned to you, and also its intermediate processes, and you shall analyze the other to me. The state of sleep is opposed to the state of waking, and out of sleeping waking is generated, and out of waking, sleeping; and the process of generation is in the one case falling asleep, and in the other waking up. Are you agreed about that?

Quite agreed.

Then, suppose that you analyze life and death to me in the same manner. Is not death opposed to life?

Yes.

And they are generated one from the other?

Yes.

What is generated from life?

Death.

And what from death?

I can only say in answer—life.

Then the living, whether things or persons, Cebes, are generated from the dead?

That is clear, he replied.

Then the inference is that our souls are in the world below?

That is true.

And one of the two processes or generations is visible—for surely the act of dying is visible?

Surely, he said.

And may not the other be inferred as the complement of nature, who is not to be supposed to go on one leg only? And if not, a corresponding process of generation in death must also be assigned to her?

Certainly, he replied.

And what is that process?

Revival.

And revival, if there be such a thing, is the birth of the dead into the world of the living?

Quite true.

Then here is a new way in which we arrive at the inference that the living come from the dead, just as the dead come from the living; and if this is true, then the souls of the dead must be in some place out of which they come again. And this, as I think, has been satisfactorily proved.

Yes, Socrates, he said; all this seems to flow necessarily out of our previous admissions.

And that these admissions were not unfair, Cebes, he said, may be shown, as I think, in this way: If generation were in a straight line only, and there were no compensation or circle in nature, no turn or return into one another, then you know that

all things would at last have the same form and pass into the same state, and there would be no more generation of them.

What do you mean? he said.

A simple thing enough, which I will illustrate by the case of sleep, he replied. You know that if there were no compensation of sleeping and waking, the story of the sleeping Eudymion would in the end have no meaning, because all other things would be asleep too, and he would not be thought of. Or if there were composition only, and no division of substances, then the chaos of Anaxagoras would come again. And in like manner, my dear Cebes, if all things which partook of life were to die, and after they were dead remained in the form of death, and did not come to life again, all would at last die, and nothing would be alive—how could this be otherwise? For if the living spring from any others who are not dead, and they die, must not all things at last be swallowed up in death?

There is no escape from that, Socrates, said Cebes; and I think that what you say is entirely true.

Yes, he said, Cebes, I entirely think so too; and we are not walking in a vain imagination; but I am confident in the belief that there truly is such a thing as living again, and that the living spring from the dead, and that the souls of the dead are in existence, and that the good souls have a better portion than the evil.

Cebes added: Your favorite doctrine, Socrates, that knowledge is simply recollection, if true, also necessarily implies a previous time in which we learned that which we now recollect. But this would be impossible unless our soul was in some place before existing in the human form; here then is another argument of the soul's immortality.

But tell me, Cebes, said Simmias interposing, what proofs are given of this doctrine of recollection? I am not very sure at this moment that I remember them.

One excellent proof, said Cebes, is afforded by question. If you put a question to a person in a right way, he will give a true answer of himself, but how could he do this unless there were knowledge and right reason already in him? And

this is most clearly shown when he is taken to a diagram or to anything of that sort.

But if, said Socrates, you are still incredulous, Simmias, I would ask you whether you may not agree with me when you look at the matter in another way; I mean, if you are still incredulous as to whether knowledge is recollection?

Incredulous, I am not, said Simmias; but I want to have this doctrine of recollection brought to my own recollection, and, from what Cebes has said, I am beginning to recollect and be convinced: but I should still like to hear what more you have to say.

This is what I should say, he replied: We should agree, if I am not mistaken, that what a man recollects he must have known at some previous time.

Very true.

And what is the nature of this recollection? And, in asking this, I mean to ask whether, when a person has already seen or heard or in any way perceived anything, and he knows not only that, but something else of which he has not the same but another knowledge, we may not fairly say that he recollects that which comes into his mind. Are we agreed about that?

What do you mean?

I mean what I may illustrate by the following instance: The knowledge of a lyre is not the same as the knowledge of a man?

True.

And yet what is the feeling of lovers when they recognize a lyre, or a garment, or anything else which the beloved has been in the habit of using? Do not they, from knowing the lyre, form in the mind's eye an image of the youth to whom the lyre belongs? And this is recollection: and in the same way any one who sees Simmias may remember Cebes; and there are endless other things of the same nature.

Yes, indeed, there are,—endless, replied Simmias.

And this sort of thing, he said, is recollection, and is most commonly a process of recovering that which has been forgotten through time and inattention.

Very true, he said.

Well; and may you not also from seeing the picture of a

horse or a lyre remember a man? and from the picture of Simmias, you may be led to remember Cebes?

True.

Or you may also be led to the recollection of Simmias himself?

True, he said.

And in all these cases, the recollection may be derived from things either like or unlike?

That is true.

And when the recollection is derived from like things, then there is sure to be another question, which is, Whether the likeness of that which is recollected is in any way defective or not?

Very true, he said.

And shall we proceed a step further, and affirm that there is such a thing as equality, not of wood with wood, or of stone with stone, but that, over and above this, there is equality in the abstract? Shall we affirm this?

Affirm, yes, and swear to it, replied Simmias, with all the confidence in life.

And do we know the nature of this abstract essence?

To be sure, he said.

And whence did we obtain this knowledge? Did we not see equalities of material things, such as pieces of wood and stones, and gather from them the idea of an equality which is different from them?—you will admit that? Or look at the matter again in this way: Do not the same pieces of wood or stone appear at one time equal, and at another time unequal?

That is certain.

But are real equals ever unequal? or is the idea of equality ever inequality?

That surely was never yet known, Socrates.

Then these (so-called) equals are not the same with the idea of equality?

I should say, clearly not, Socrates.

And yet from these equals although differing from the idea of equality, you conceived and attained that idea?

Very true, he said.

Which might be like, or might be unlike them?



Yes.

But that makes no difference: whenever from seeing one thing you conceived another, whether like or unlike, there must surely have been an act of recollection?

Very true.

But what would you say of equal portions of wood and stone, or other material equals? and what is the impression produced by them? Are they equals in the same sense as absolute equality? or do they fall short of this in a measure?

Yes, he said, in a very great measure too.

And must we not allow that when I or any one look at any object, and perceive that the object aims at being some other thing, but falls short of, and cannot attain to it,—he who makes this observation must have had a previous knowledge of that to which, as he says, the other, although similar, was inferior?

Certainly.

And has not this been our own case in the matter of equals and of absolute equality?

Precisely.

Then he must have known absolute equality previously to the time when we first saw the material equals, and reflected that all these apparent equals aim at this absolute equality, but fall short of it?

That is true.

And we recognize also that this absolute equality has only been known, and can only be known, through the medium of sight or touch, or of some other sense. And this I would affirm of all such conceptions.

Yes, Socrates, as far as the argument is concerned, one of them is the same as the other.

And from the senses then is derived the knowledge that all sensible things aim at an idea of equality of which they fall short—is not that true?

Yes.

Then before we began to see or hear or perceive in any way, we must have had a knowledge of absolute equality, or we could not have referred to that the equals which are de-

rived from the senses?—for to that they all aspire, and of that they fall short?

That, Socrates, is certainly to be inferred from the previous statements.

And did we not see and hear and acquire our other senses as soon as we were born?

Certainly.

Then we must have acquired the knowledge of the ideal equal at some time previous to this?

Yes.

That is to say, before we were born, I suppose?

True.

And if we acquired this knowledge before we were born, and were born having it, then we also knew before we were born and at the instant of birth not only the equal or the greater or the less, but all other ideas; for we are not speaking only of equality absolute, but of beauty, good, justice, holiness, and all which we stamp with the name of essence in the dialectical process, when we ask and answer questions. Of all this we may certainly affirm that we acquired the knowledge before birth?

That is true.

But if, after having acquired, we have not forgotten that which we acquired, then we must always have been born with knowledge, and shall always continue to know as long as life lasts—for knowing is the acquiring and retaining knowledge and not forgetting. Is not forgetting, Simmias, just the losing of knowledge?

Quite true, Socrates.

But if the knowledge which we acquired before birth was lost by us at birth, and if afterwards by the use of the senses we recovered that which we previously knew, will not that which we call learning be a process of recovering our knowledge, and may not this be rightly termed recollection by us?

Very true.

For this is clear, that when we perceived something, either by the help of sight, or hearing, or some other sense, there was no difficulty in receiving from this a conception of some other thing like or unlike which had been forgotten and which was

associated with this ; and therefore, as I was saying, one of two alternatives follows : either we had this knowledge at birth, and continued to know through life ; or, after birth, those who are said to learn only remember, and learning is recollection only.

Yes, that is quite true, Socrates.

And which alternative, Simmias, do you prefer ? Had we the knowledge at our birth, or did we remember afterwards the things which we knew previously to our birth ?

I cannot decide at the moment.

At any rate you can decide whether he who has knowledge ought or ought not to be able to give a reason for what he knows.

Certainly, he ought.

But do you think that every man is able to give a reason about these very matters of which we are speaking ?

I wish that they could, Socrates, but I greatly fear that to-morrow at this time there will be no one able to give a reason worth having.

Then you are not of opinion, Simmias, that all men know these things ?

Certainly not.

Then they are in process of recollecting that which they learned before ?

Certainly.

But when did our souls acquire this knowledge ?—not since we were born as men ?

Certainly not.

And therefore, previously ?

Yes.

Then, Simmias, our souls must have existed before they were in the form of man—without bodies, and must have had intelligence ?

Unless indeed you suppose, Socrates, that these notions were given us at the moment of birth ; for this is the only time that remains.

Yes, my friend, but when did we lose them ? for they are not in us when we are born—that is admitted. Did we lose them at the moment of receiving them, or at some other time ?

No, Socrates, I perceive that I was unconsciously talking nonsense.

Then may we not say, Simmias, that if, as we are always repeating, there is an absolute beauty, and goodness, and essence in general, and to this, which is now discovered to be a previous condition of our being, we refer all our sensations, and with this compare them—assuming this to have a prior existence, then our souls must have had a prior existence, but if not, there would be no force in the argument. There can be no doubt that if these absolute ideas existed before we were born, then our souls must have existed before we were born, and if not the ideas, then not the souls.

Yes, Socrates; I am convinced that there is precisely the same necessity for the existence of the soul before birth, and of the essence of which you are speaking: and the argument arrives at a result which happily agrees with my own notion. For there is nothing which to my mind is so evident as that beauty, good, and other notions of which you were just now speaking have a most real and absolute existence; and I am satisfied with the proof.

Well, but is Cebes equally satisfied? for I must convince him too.

I think, said Simmias, that Cebes is satisfied: although he is the most incredulous of mortals, yet I believe that he is convinced of the existence of the soul before birth. But that after death the soul will continue to exist is not yet proven even to my own satisfaction. I cannot get rid of the feeling of the many to which Cebes was referring—the feeling that when the man dies the soul may be scattered, and that this may be the end of her. For admitting that she may be generated and created in some other place, and may have existed before entering the human body, why after having entered in and gone out again may she not herself be destroyed and come to an end?

Very true, Simmias, said Cebes; that our soul existed before we were born was the first half of the argument, and this appears to have been proven; that the soul will exist after death as well as before birth is the other half of which the proof is still wanting, and has to be supplied.

But that proof, Simmias and Cebes, has been already given,

said Socrates, if you put the two arguments together—I mean this and the former one, in which we admitted that everything living is born of the dead. For if the soul existed before birth, and in coming to life and being born can be born only from death and dying, must she not after death continue to exist, since she has to be born again? surely the proof which you desire has been already furnished. Still I suspect that you and Simmias would be glad to probe the argument further; like children, you are haunted with a fear that when the soul leaves the body, the wind may really blow her away and scatter her; especially if a man should happen to die in stormy weather and not when the sky is calm.

Cebes answered with a smile: Then, Socrates, you must argue us out of our fears—and yet, strictly speaking, they are not our fears, but there is a child within us to whom death is a sort of hobgoblin; him too we must persuade not to be afraid when he is alone with him in the dark.

Socrates said: Let the voice of the charmer be applied daily until you have charmed him away.

And where shall we find a good charmer of our fears, Socrates, when you are gone?

Hellas, he replied, is a large place, Cebes, and has many good men, and there are barbarous races not a few: seek for him among them all, far and wide, sparing neither pains nor money; for there is no better way of using your money. And you must not forget to seek for him among yourselves too; for he is nowhere more likely to be found.

The search, replied Cebes, shall certainly be made. And now, if you please, let us return to the point of argument at which we digressed.

By all means, replied Socrates; what else should I please? Very good, he said.

Must we not, said Socrates, ask ourselves some question of this sort?—What is that which, as we imagine, is liable to be scattered away, and about which we fear? and what again is that about which we have no fear? And then we may proceed to inquire whether that which suffers dispersion is or is not of the nature of soul—our hopes and fears as to our own souls will turn upon that.



That is true, he said.

Now the compound or composite may be supposed to be naturally capable of being dissolved in like manner as of being compounded; but that which is uncompounded, and that only, must be, if anything is, indissoluble.

Yes; that is what I should imagine, said Cebes.

And the uncompounded may be assumed to be the same and unchanging, whereas the compound is always changing and never the same?

That I also think, he said.

Then now let us return to the previous discussion. Is that idea or essence, which in the dialectical process we define as essence or true existence—whether essence of equality, beauty, or anything else: are these essences, I say, liable at times to some degree of change? or are they each of them always what they are, having the same simple self-existent and unchanging forms, and not admitting of variation at all, or in any way, or at any time?

They must be always the same, Socrates, replied Cebes.

And what would you say of the many beautiful,—whether men or horses or garments or any other things which may be called equal or beautiful,—are they all unchanging and the same always, or quite the reverse? May they not rather be described as almost always changing and hardly ever the same, either with themselves or with one another?

The latter, replied Cebes; they are always in a state of change.

And these you can touch and see and perceive with the senses, but the unchanging things you can only perceive with the mind—they are invisible and are not seen?

That is very true, he said.

Well, then, he added, let us suppose that there are two sorts of existences, one seen, the other unseen.

Let us suppose them.

The seen is the changing, and the unseen is the unchanging?

That may be also supposed.

And, further, is not one part of us body, and the rest of us soul?

To be sure.

And to which class may we say that the body is more alike and akin?

Clearly to the seen: no one can doubt that.

And is the soul seen or not seen?

Not by man, Socrates.

And by "seen" and "not seen" is meant by us that which is or is not visible to the eye of man?

Yes, to the eye of man.

And what do we say of the soul? is that seen or not seen?

Not seen.

Unseen then?

Yes.

Then the soul is more like to the unseen, and the body to the seen?

That is most certain, Socrates.

And were we not saying long ago that the soul when using the body as an instrument of perception, that is to say, when using the sense of sight or hearing or some other sense (for the meaning of perceiving through the body is perceiving through the senses),—were we not saying that the soul too is then dragged by the body into the region of the changeable, and wanders and is confused; the world spins round her, and she is like a drunkard when under their influence?

Very true.

But when returning into herself she reflects; then she passes into the realm of purity, and eternity, and immortality, and unchangeableness, which are her kindred, and with them she ever lives, when she is by herself and is not let or hindered; then she ceases from her erring ways, and being in communion with the unchanging is unchanging. And this state of the soul is called wisdom?

That is well and truly said, Socrates, he replied.

And to which class is the soul more nearly alike and akin, as far as may be inferred from this argument, as well as from the preceding one?

I think, Socrates, that, in the opinion of every one who follows the argument, the soul will be infinitely more like the unchangeable,—even the most stupid person will not deny that.

And the body is more like the changing?

Yes.

Yet once more consider the matter in this light: When the soul and the body are united, then nature orders the soul to rule and govern, and the body to obey and serve. Now which of these two functions is akin to the divine? and which to the mortal? Does not the divine appear to you to be that which naturally orders and rules, and the mortal that which is subject and servant?

True.

And which does the soul resemble?

The soul resembles the divine, and the body the mortal,—there can be no doubt of that, Socrates.

Then reflect, Cebes: is not the conclusion of the whole matter this,—that the soul is in the very likeness of the divine, and immortal, and intelligible, and uniform, and indissoluble, and unchangeable; and the body is in the very likeness of the human, and mortal, and unintelligible, and multiform, and dissoluble, and changeable. Can this, my dear Cebes, be denied?

No, indeed.

But if this is true, then is not the body liable to speedy dissolution? and is not the soul almost or altogether indissoluble?

Certainly.

And do you further observe, that after a man is dead, the body, which is the visible part of man, and has a visible framework, which is called a corpse, and which would naturally be dissolved and decomposed and dissipated, is not dissolved or decomposed at once, but may remain for a good while, if the constitution be sound at the time of death, and the season of the year favorable? For the body when shrunk and embalmed, as is the custom in Egypt, may remain almost entire through infinite ages; and even in decay, still there are some portions, such as the bones and ligaments, which are practically indestructible. You allow that?

Yes.

And are we to suppose that the soul, which is invisible, in passing to the true Hades, which like her is invisible, and pure, and noble, and on her way to the good and wise God, whither, if God will, my soul is also soon to go,—that the

soul, I repeat, if this be her nature and origin, is blown away and perishes immediately on quitting the body, as the many say? That can never be, my dear Simmias and Cebes. The truth rather is that the soul which is pure at departing draws after her no bodily taint, having never voluntarily had connection with the body, which she is ever avoiding, herself gathered into herself (for such abstraction has been the study of her life). And what does this mean but that she has been a true disciple of philosophy, and has practised how to die easily? And is not philosophy the practise of death?

Certainly.

That soul, I say, herself invisible, departs to the invisible world,—to the divine and immortal and rational: thither arriving, she lives in bliss and is released from the error and folly of men, their fears and wild passions and all other human ills, and forever dwells, as they say of the initiated, in company with the gods. Is not this true, Cebes?

Yes, said Cebes, beyond a doubt.

But the soul which has been polluted, and is impure at the time of her departure, and is the companion and servant of the body always, and is in love with and fascinated by the body and by the desires and pleasures of the body, until she is led to believe that the truth only exists in a bodily form, which a man may touch and see and taste and use for the purposes of his lusts,—the soul, I mean, accustomed to hate and fear and avoid the intellectual principle, which to the bodily eye is dark and invisible, and can be attained only by philosophy,—do you suppose that such a soul as this will depart pure and unalloyed?

That is impossible, he replied.

She is engrossed by the corporeal, which the continual association and constant care of the body have made natural to her.

Very true.

And this, my friend, may be conceived to be that heavy, weighty, earthy element of sight by which such a soul is depressed and dragged down again into the visible world, because she is afraid of the invisible and of the world below—prowling about tombs and sepulchers, in the neighborhood of which, as

they tell us, are seen certain ghostly apparitions of souls which have not departed pure, but are cloyed with sight and therefore visible.

That is very likely, Socrates.

Yes, that is very likely, Cebes; and these must be the souls, not of the good, but of the evil, who are compelled to wander about such places in payment of the penalty of their former evil way of life; and they continue to wander until the desire which haunts them is satisfied and they are imprisoned in another body. And they may be supposed to be fixed in the same natures which they had in their former life.

What natures do you mean, Socrates?

I mean to say that men who have followed after gluttony, and wantonness, and drunkenness, and have had no thought of avoiding them, would pass into asses and animals of that sort. What do you think?

I think that exceedingly probable.

And those who have chosen the portion of injustice, and tyranny, and violence, will pass into wolves, or hawks, and kites; whither else can we suppose them to go?

Yes, said Cebes; that is doubtless the place of natures such as theirs.

And there is no difficulty, he said, in assigning to all of them places answering to their several natures and propensities?

There is not, he said.

Even among them some are happier than others; and the happiest both in themselves and their place of abode are those who have practised the civil and social virtues which are called temperance and justice, and are acquired by habit and attention without philosophy and mind.

Why are they the happiest?

Because they may be expected to pass into some gentle, social nature which is like their own, such as that of bees or ants, or even back again into the form of man, and just and moderate men spring from them.

That is not impossible.

But he who is a philosopher or lover of learning, and is entirely pure at departing, is alone permitted to reach the gods. And this is the reason, Simmias and Cebes, why the true vo-



taries of philosophy abstain from all fleshly lusts, and endure and refuse to give themselves up to them,—not because they fear poverty or the ruin of their families, like the lovers of money, and the world in general; nor like the lovers of power and honor, because they dread the dishonor or disgrace of evil deeds.

No, Socrates, that would not become them, said Cebes.

No, indeed, he replied; and therefore they who have a care of their souls, and do not merely live in the fashions of the body, say farewell to all this; they will not walk in the ways of the blind: and when Philosophy offers them purification and release from evil, they feel that they ought not to resist her influence, and to her they incline, and whither she leads they follow her.

What do you mean, Socrates?

I will tell you, he said. The lovers of knowledge are conscious that their souls, when philosophy receives them, are simply fastened and glued to their bodies: the soul is only able to view existence through the bars of a prison, and not in her own nature; she is wallowing in the mire of all ignorance; and philosophy, seeing the terrible nature of her confinement, and that the captive through desire is led to conspire in her own captivity (for the lovers of knowledge are aware that this was the original state of the soul, and that when she was in this state philosophy received and gently counseled her, and wanted to release her, pointing out to her that the eye is full of deceit, and also the ear and the other senses, and persuading her to retire from them in all but the necessary use of them and to be gathered up and collected into herself, and to trust only to herself and her own intuitions of absolute existence, and mistrust that which comes to her through others and is subject to vicissitude)—philosophy shows her that this is visible and tangible, but that what she sees in her own nature is intellectual and invisible. And the soul of the true philosopher thinks that she ought not to resist this deliverance, and therefore abstains from pleasures and desires and pains and fears, as far as she is able; reflecting that when a man has great joys or sorrows or fears or desires, he suffers from them, not the sort of evil which might be anticipated,—as, for example, the

loss of his health or property, which he has sacrificed to his lusts,—but he has suffered an evil greater far, which is the greatest and worst of all evils, and one of which he never thinks.

And what is that, Socrates? said Cebes.

Why this: When the feeling of pleasure or pain in the soul is most intense, all of us naturally suppose that the object of this intense feeling is then plainest and truest: but this is not the case.

Very true.

And this is the state in which the soul is most enthralled by the body.

How is that?

Why, because each pleasure and pain is a sort of nail which nails and rivets the soul to the body, and engrosses her and makes her believe that to be true which the body affirms to be true; and from agreeing with the body and having the same delights she is obliged to have the same habits and ways, and is not likely ever to be pure at her departure to the world below, but is always saturated with the body; so that she soon sinks into another body and there germinates and grows, and has therefore no part in the communion of the divine and pure and simple.

That is most true, Socrates, answered Cebes.

And this, Cebes, is the reason why the true lovers of knowledge are temperate and brave; and not for the reason which the world gives.

Certainly not.

Certainly not! For not in that way does the soul of a philosopher reason: she will not ask philosophy to release her in order that when released she may deliver herself up again to the thralldom of pleasures and pains, doing a work only to be undone again, weaving instead of unweaving her Penelope's web.<sup>1</sup> But she will make herself a calm of passion, and follow

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<sup>1</sup> Penelope, wife of Odysseus, was beset by many suitors in her husband's absence at Troy. To put them off she promised to make her choice as soon as she had finished a shroud for Laertes, her father-in-law, but each night she unravelled her day's work.

Reason, and dwell in her, beholding the true and divine (which is not matter of opinion), and thence derive nourishment. Thus she seeks to live while she lives, and after death she hopes to go to her own kindred and to be freed from human ills. Never fear, Simmias and Cebes, that a soul which has been thus nurtured and has had these pursuits, will at her departure from the body be scattered and blown away by the winds and be nowhere and nothing.

When Socrates had done speaking, for a considerable time there was silence; he himself and most of us appeared to be meditating on what had been said; only Cebes and Simmias spoke a few words to one another. And Socrates observing this asked them what they thought of the argument, and whether there was anything wanting? For, said he, much is still open to suspicion and attack, if any one were disposed to sift the matter thoroughly. If you are talking of something else I would rather not interrupt you, but if you are still doubtful about the argument do not hesitate to say exactly what you think, and let us have anything better which you can suggest; and if I am likely to be of any use, allow me to help you.

Simmias said: I must confess, Socrates, that doubts did arise in our minds, and each of us was urging and inciting the other to put the question which we wanted to have answered and which neither of us liked to ask, fearing that our importunity might be troublesome under present circumstances.

Socrates smiled and said: O Simmias, how strange that is; I am not very likely to persuade other men that I do not regard my present situation as a misfortune, if I am unable to persuade you, and you will keep fancying that I am at all more troubled now than at any other time. Will you not allow that I have as much of the spirit of prophecy in me as the swans?<sup>1</sup> For they, when they perceive that they must die, having sung all their life long, do then sing more than ever, rejoicing in the thought that they are about to go away to the god whose ministers they are. But men, because they are themselves afraid of death, slanderously affirm of the swans that they sing a lament

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<sup>1</sup> The swan was sacred to Apollo, and supposed to have been endowed by him with the gifts of song and prophecy.

at the last, not considering that no bird sings when cold, or hungry, or in pain, not even the nightingale, nor the swallow, nor yet the hoopoe; which are said indeed to tune a lay of sorrow, although I do not believe this to be true of them any more than of the swans. But because they are sacred to Apollo and have the gift of prophecy and anticipate the good things of another world, therefore they sing and rejoice in that day more than they ever did before. And I, too, believing myself to be the consecrated servant of the same God, and the fellow servant of the swans, and thinking that I have received from my master gifts of prophecy which are not inferior to theirs, would not go out of life less merrily than the swans. Cease to mind then about this, but speak and ask anything which you like, while the eleven magistrates of Athens allow.

Well, Socrates, said Simmias, then I will tell you my difficulty, and Cebes will tell you his. For I dare say that you, Socrates, feel as I do, how very hard or almost impossible is the attainment of any certainty about questions such as these in the present life. And yet I should deem him a coward who did not prove what is said about them to the uttermost, or whose heart failed him before he had examined them on every side. For he should persevere until he has attained one of two things: either he should discover or learn the truth about them; or, if this is impossible, I would have him take the best and most irrefragable of human notions, and let this be the raft upon which he sails through life—not without risk, as I admit, if he cannot find some word of God which will more surely and safely carry him. And now, as you bid me, I will venture to question you, as I should not like to reproach myself hereafter with not having said at the time what I think. For when I consider the matter either alone or with Cebes, the argument does certainly appear to me, Socrates, to be not sufficient.

Socrates answered: I dare say, my friend, that you may be right, but I should like to know in what respect the argument is not sufficient.

In this respect, replied Simmias: Might not a person use the same argument about harmony and the lyre—might he not say that harmony is a thing invisible, incorporeal, fair,

divine, abiding in the lyre which is harmonized, but that the lyre and the strings are matter and material, composite, earthly, and akin to mortality? And when some one breaks the lyre, or cuts and rends the strings, then he who takes this view would argue as you do, and on the same analogy, that the harmony survives and has not perished; for you cannot imagine, as he would say, that the lyre without the strings, and the broken strings themselves, remain, and yet that the harmony, which is of heavenly and immortal nature and kindred, has perished—and perished too before the mortal. That harmony, he would say, certainly exists somewhere, and the wood and strings will decay before that decays. For I suspect, Socrates, that the notion of the soul which we are all of us inclined to entertain, would also be yours, and that you too would conceive the body to be strung up, and held together, by the elements of hot and cold, wet and dry, and the like, and that the soul is the harmony or due proportionate admixture of them. And, if this is true, the inference clearly is that when the strings of the body are unduly loosened or overstrained through disorder or other injury, then the soul, though most divine, like other harmonies of music or of the works of art, of course perishes at once, although the material remains of the body may last for a considerable time, until they are either decayed or burnt. Now if any one maintained that the soul, being the harmony of the elements of the body, first perishes in that which is called death, how shall we answer him?

Socrates looked round at us as his manner was, and said with a smile: Simmias has reason on his side; and why does not some one of you who is abler than myself answer him? for there is force in his attack upon me. But perhaps, before we answer him, we had better also hear what Cebes has to say against the argument—this will give us time for reflection, and when both of them have spoken, we may either assent to them, if their words appear to be in consonance with the truth, or if not, we may take up the other side, and argue with them. Please to tell me then, Cebes, he said, what was the difficulty which troubled you?

Cebes said: I will tell you. My feeling is that the argument is still in the same position, and open to the same objec-



tions which were urged before; for I am ready to admit that the existence of the soul before entering into the bodily form has been very ingeniously, and, as I may be allowed to say, quite sufficiently proven; but the existence of the soul after death is still, in my judgment, unproven. Now my objection is not the same as that of Simmias; for I am not disposed to deny that the soul is stronger and more lasting than the body, being of opinion that in all such respects the soul very far excels the body. Well, then, says the argument to me, why do you remain unconvinced? When you see that the weaker is still in existence after the man is dead, will you not admit that the more lasting must also survive during the same period of time? Now I, like Simmias, must employ a figure; and I shall ask you to consider whether the figure is to the point. The parallel which I will suppose is that of an old weaver, who dies, and after his death somebody says: He is not dead, he must be alive; and he appeals to the coat which he himself wove and wore, and which is still whole and undecayed. And then he proceeds to ask of some one who is incredulous, whether a man lasts longer, or the coat which is in use and wear; and when he is answered that a man lasts far longer, thinks that he has thus certainly demonstrated the survival of the man, who is the more lasting, because the less lasting remains. But that, Simmias, as I would beg you to observe, is not the truth; every one sees that he who talks thus is talking nonsense. For the truth is that this weaver, having worn and woven many such coats, though he outlived several of them, was himself outlived by the last; but this is surely very far from proving that a man is slighter and weaker than a coat. Now the relation of the body to the soul may be expressed in a similar figure; for you may say with reason that the soul is lasting, and the body weak and short-lived in comparison. And every soul may be said to wear out many bodies, especially in the course of a long life. For if while the man is alive the body deliquesces and decays, and yet the soul always weaves her garment anew and repairs the waste, then of course, when the soul perishes, she must have on her last garment, and this only will survive her; but then again when the soul is dead the body will at last show its native weakness, and soon pass

into decay. And therefore this is an argument on which I would rather not rely as proving that the soul exists after death. For suppose that we grant even more than you affirm as within the range of possibility, and besides acknowledging that the soul existed before birth admit also that after death the souls of some are existing still, and will exist, and will be born and die again and again, and that there is a natural strength in the soul which will hold out and be born many times—for all this, we may be still inclined to think that she will weary in the labors of successive births, and may at last succumb in one of her deaths and utterly perish; and this death and dissolution of the body which brings destruction to the soul may be unknown to any of us, for no one of us can have had any experience of it: and if this be true, then I say that he who is confident in death has but a foolish confidence, unless he is able to prove that the soul is altogether immortal and imperishable. But if he is not able to prove this, he who is about to die will always have reason to fear that when the body is disunited, the soul also may utterly perish.

All of us, as we afterwards remarked to one another, had an unpleasant feeling at hearing them say this. When we had been so firmly convinced before, now to have our faith shaken seemed to introduce a confusion and uncertainty, not only into the previous argument, but into any future one; either we were not good judges, or there were no real grounds of belief.

*Ech.* There I feel with you—indeed I do, Phædo, and when you were speaking, I was beginning to ask myself the same question: What argument can I ever trust again? For what could be more convincing than the argument of Socrates, which has now fallen into discredit? That the soul is a harmony is a doctrine which has always had a wonderful attraction for me, and, when mentioned, came back to me at once, as my own original conviction. And now I must begin again and find another argument which will assure me that when the man is dead the soul dies not with him. Tell me, I beg, how did Socrates proceed? Did he appear to share the unpleasant feeling which you mention? or did he receive the interruption calmly and give a sufficient answer? Tell us, as exactly as you can, what passed.

*Phæd.* Often Echecrates, as I have admired Socrates, I never admired him more than at that moment. That he should be able to answer was nothing, but what astonished me was, first, the gentle and pleasant and approving manner in which he regarded the words of the young men, and then his quick sense of the wound which had been inflicted by the argument, and his ready application of the healing art. He might be compared to a general rallying his defeated and broken army, urging them to follow him and return to the field of argument.

*Ech.* How was that?

*Phæd.* You shall hear, for I was close to him on his right hand, seated on a sort of stool, and he on a couch which was a good deal higher. Now he had a way of playing with my hair, and then he smoothed my head, and pressed the hair upon my neck, and said: To-morrow, Phædo, I suppose that these fair locks of yours will be severed.<sup>1</sup>

Yes, Socrates, I suppose that they will, I replied.

Not so if you will take my advice.

What shall I do with them? I said.

To-day, he replied, and not to-morrow, if this argument dies and cannot be brought to life again by us, you and I will both shave our locks; and if I were you, and could not maintain my ground against Simmias and Cebes, I would myself take an oath, like the Argives, not to wear hair any more until I had renewed the conflict and defeated them.

Yes, I said, but Heracles himself is said not to be a match for two.<sup>2</sup>

Summon me then, he said, and I will be your Iolaus until the sun goes down.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In mourning for the dead master.

<sup>2</sup> While Heracles was fighting the Hydra, he was attacked by a crab, and was forced to call for help upon Iolaus, his youthful companion. Hence the proverb.

<sup>3</sup> When Socrates was to take the hemlock. The loving gentleness and modesty of the philosopher in these closing hours of life presents a view of his character that is beyond compare, save with St. John's account of the Last Supper of Jesus. (See the translations upon page 128.)

I summon you rather, I said, not as Heracles summoning Iolaus, but as Iolaus might summon Heracles.

That will be all the same, he said. But first let us take care that we avoid a danger.

And what is that? I said.

The danger of becoming misologists, he replied, which is one of the very worst things that can happen to us. For as there are misanthropists or haters of men, there are also misologists or haters of ideas, and both spring from the same cause, which is ignorance of the world. Misanthropy arises from the too great confidence of inexperience; you trust a man and think him altogether true and good and faithful, and then in a little while he turns out to be false and knavish; and then another and another, and when this has happened several times to a man, especially within the circle of his own most trusted friends, as he deems them, and he has often quarreled with them, he at last hates all men, and believes that no one has any good in him at all. I dare say that you must have observed this.

Yes, I said.

And is not this discreditable? The reason is that a man, having to deal with other men, has no knowledge of them; for if he had knowledge, he would have known the true state of the case, that few are the good and few the evil, and that the great majority are in the interval between them.

How do you mean? I said.

I mean, he replied, as you might say of the very large and very small, that nothing is more uncommon than a very large or a very small man; and this applies generally to all extremes, whether of great and small, or swift and slow, or fair and foul, or black and white: and whether the instances you select be men or dogs or anything else, few are the extremes, but many are in the mean between them. Did you never observe this?

Yes, I said, I have.

And do you not imagine, he said, that if there were a competition of evil, the first in evil would be found to be very few?

Yes, that is very likely, I said.

Yes, that is very likely, he replied; not that in this respect



arguments are like men—there I was led on by you to say more than I had intended; but the point of comparison was that when a simple man who has no skill in dialectics believes an argument to be true which he afterwards imagines to be false, whether really false or not, and then another and another, he has no longer any faith left, and great disputers, as you know, come to think at last that they have grown to be the wisest of mankind; for they alone perceive the utter unsoundness and instability of all arguments, or, indeed, of all things, which, like the currents in the Euripus,<sup>1</sup> are going up and down in never-ceasing ebb and flow.

That is quite true, I said.

Yes, Phædo, he replied, and very melancholy too, if there be such a thing as truth or certainty or power of knowing at all, that a man should have lighted upon some argument or other which at first seemed true and then turned out to be false, and instead of blaming himself and his own want of wit, because he is annoyed, should at last be too glad to transfer the blame from himself to arguments in general; and forever afterwards should hate and revile them, and lose the truth and knowledge of existence.

Yes, indeed, I said; that is very melancholy.

Let us, then, in the first place, he said, be careful of admitting into our souls the notion that there is no truth or health or soundness in any arguments at all; but let us rather say that there is as yet no health in us, and that we must quit ourselves like men and do our best to gain health,—you and all other men with a view to the whole of your future life, and I myself with a view to death. For at this moment I am sensible that I have not the temper of a philosopher; like the vulgar, I am only a partisan. For the partisan, when he is engaged in a dispute, cares nothing about the rights of the question, but is anxious only to convince his hearers of his own assertions. And the difference between him and me at the present moment is only this,—that whereas he seeks to convince his hearers that what he says is true, I am rather seeking to convince myself; to convince my hearers is a sec-

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<sup>1</sup> The strait between Bœotia and the island Eubœa.



ondary matter with me. And do but see how much I gain by this. For if what I say is true, then I do well to be persuaded of the truth, but if there be nothing after death, still, during the short time that remains, I shall save my friends from lamentations, and my ignorance will not last, and therefore no harm will be done. This is the state of mind, Simmias and Cebes, in which I approach the argument. And I would ask you to be thinking of the truth and not of Socrates: agree with me, if I seem to you to be speaking the truth; or if not, withstand me might and main, that I may not deceive you as well as myself in my enthusiasm, and, like the bee, leave my sting in you before I die.

And now let us proceed, he said. And first of all let me be sure that I have in my mind what you were saying. Simmias, if I remember rightly, has fears and misgivings whether the soul, being in the form of harmony, although a fairer and diviner thing than the body, may not perish first. On the other hand, Cebes appeared to grant that the soul was more lasting than the body, but he said that no one could know whether the soul, after having worn out many bodies, might not perish herself and leave her last body behind her; and that this is death, which is the destruction not of the body but of the soul, for in the body the work of destruction is ever going on. Are not these, Simmias and Cebes, the points which we have to consider?

They both agreed to this statement of them.

He proceeded: And did you deny the force of the whole preceding argument, or of a part only?

Of a part only, they replied.

And what did you think, he said, of that part of the argument in which we said that knowledge was recollection only, and inferred from this that the soul must have previously existed somewhere else before she was enclosed in the body? Cebes said that he had been wonderfully impressed by that part of the argument, and that his conviction remained unshaken. Simmias agreed, and added that he himself could hardly imagine the possibility of his ever thinking differently about that.

But, rejoined Socrates, you will have to think differently, my

Theban friend, if you still maintain that harmony is a compound, and that the soul is a harmony which is made out of strings set in the frame of the body; for you will surely never allow yourself to say that a harmony is prior to the elements which compose the harmony.

No, Socrates, that is impossible.

But do you not see that you *are* saying this when you say that the soul existed before she took the form and body of man, and was made up of elements which as yet had no existence? For harmony is not a sort of thing like the soul, as you suppose; but first the lyre, and the strings, and the sounds exist in a state of discord, and then harmony is made last of all, and perishes first. And how can such a notion of the soul as this agree with the other?

Not at all, replied Simmias.

And yet, he said, there surely ought to be harmony when harmony is the theme of discourse.

There ought, replied Simmias.

But there is no harmony, he said, in the two propositions that knowledge is recollection, and that the soul is a harmony. Which of them, then, will you retain?

I think, he replied, that I have a much stronger faith, Socrates, in the first of the two, which has been fully demonstrated to me, than in the latter, which has not been demonstrated at all, but rests only on probable and plausible grounds; and I know too well that these arguments from probabilities are impostors, and unless great caution is observed in the use of them they are apt to be deceptive—in geometry, and in other things too. But the doctrine of knowledge and recollection has been proven to me on trustworthy grounds; and the proof was that the soul must have existed before she came into the body, because to her belongs the essence of which the very name implies existence. Having, as I am convinced, rightly accepted this conclusion, and on sufficient grounds, I must, as I suppose, cease to argue or allow others to argue that the soul is a harmony.

Let me put the matter, Simmias, he said, in another point of view: Do you imagine that a harmony or any other com-

position can be in a state other than that of the elements out of which it is compounded?

Certainly not.

Or do or suffer anything other than they do or suffer?

He agreed.

Then a harmony does not lead the parts or elements which make up the harmony, but only follows them.

He assented.

For harmony cannot possibly have any motion, or sound, or other quality which is opposed to the parts.

That would be impossible, he replied.

And does not every harmony depend upon the manner in which the elements are harmonized?

I do not understand you, he said.

I mean to say that a harmony admits of degrees, and is more of a harmony, and more completely a harmony, when more completely harmonized, if that be possible; and less of a harmony, and less completely a harmony, when less harmonized.

True.

But does the soul admit of degrees? or is one soul in the very least degree more or less, or more or less completely, a soul than another?

Not in the least.

Yet surely one soul is said to have intelligence and virtue, and to be good, and another soul is said to have folly and vice, and to be an evil soul: and this is said truly?

Yes, truly.

But what will those who maintain the soul to be a harmony say of this presence of virtue and vice in the soul?—will they say that here is another harmony, and another discord, and that the virtuous soul is harmonized, and herself being harmony has another harmony within her, and that the vicious soul is inharmonical and has no harmony within her?

I cannot say, replied Simmias; but I suppose that something of that kind would be asserted by those who take this view.

And the admission is already made that no soul is more a soul than another; and this is equivalent to admitting that

harmony is not more or less harmony, or more or less completely a harmony?

Quite true.

And that which is not more or less a harmony is not more or less harmonized?

True.

And that which is not more or less harmonized cannot have more or less of harmony, but only an equal harmony?

Yes, an equal harmony.

Then one soul not being more or less absolutely a soul than another, is not more or less harmonized?

Exactly.

And therefore has neither more nor less of harmony or of discord?

She has not.

And having neither more nor less of harmony or of discord, one soul has no more vice or virtue than another, if vice be discord and virtue harmony?

Not at all more.

Or speaking more correctly, Simmias, the soul, if she is a harmony, will never have any vice; because a harmony, being absolutely a harmony, has no part in the inharmonical?

No.

And therefore a soul which is absolutely a soul has no vice?

How can she have, consistently with the preceding argument?

Then, according to this, if the souls of all animals are equally and absolutely souls, they will be equally good?

I agree with you, Socrates, he said.

And can all this be true, think you? he said; and are all these consequences admissible—which nevertheless seem to follow from the assumption that the soul is a harmony?

Certainly not, he said.

Once more, he said, what ruling principle is there of human things other than the soul, and especially the wise soul? Do you know of any?

Indeed, I do not.

And is the soul in agreement with the affections of the body? or is she at variance with them? For example, when

the body is hot and thirsty, does not the soul incline us against drinking? and when the body is hungry, against eating? And this is only one instance out of ten thousand of the opposition of the soul to the things of the body.

Very true.

But we have already acknowledged that the soul, being a harmony, can never utter a note at variance with the tensions and relaxations and vibrations and other affections of the strings out of which she is composed; she can only follow, she cannot lead them?

Yes, he said, we acknowledge that, certainly.

And yet do we not now discover the soul to be doing the exact opposite—leading the elements of which she is believed to be composed; almost always opposing and coercing them in all sorts of ways throughout life, sometimes more violently with the pains of medicine and gymnastic; then again more gently; threatening and also reprimanding the desires, passions, fears, as if talking to a thing which is not herself, as Homer in the “Odyssey” represents Odysseus doing in the words,

He beat his breast, and thus reproached his heart:  
Endure, my heart; far worse hast thou endured!

Do you think that Homer could have written this under the idea that the soul is a harmony capable of being led by the affections of the body, and not rather of a nature which leads and masters them; and herself a far diviner thing than any harmony?

Yes, Socrates, I quite agree to that.

Then, my friend, we can never be right in saying that the soul is a harmony, for that would clearly contradict the divine Homer as well as ourselves.

True, he said.

Thus much, said Socrates, of Harmonia, your Theban goddess, Cebes, who has not been ungracious to us, I think; but what shall I say to the Theban Cadmus, and how shall I propitiate him?

I think that you will discover a way of propitiating him, said Cebes; I am sure that you have answered the argument



about harmony in a manner that I could never have expected. For when Simmias mentioned his objection, I quite imagined that no answer could be given to him, and therefore I was surprised at finding that his argument could not sustain the first onset of yours; and not impossibly the other, whom you call Cadmus, may share a similar fate.

Nay, my good friend, said Socrates, let us not boast, lest some evil eye should put to flight the word which I am about to speak. That, however, may be left in the hands of those above, while I draw near in Homeric fashion, and try the mettle of your words. Briefly, the sum of your objection is as follows: You want to have proven to you that the soul is imperishable and immortal, and you think that the philosopher who is confident in death has but a vain and foolish confidence, if he thinks that he will fare better than one who has led another sort of life, in the world below, unless he can prove this; and you say that the demonstration of the strength and divinity of the soul, and of her existence prior to our becoming men, does not necessarily imply her immortality. Granting that the soul is long-lived, and has known and done much in a former state, still she is not on that account immortal; and her entrance into the human form may be a sort of disease which is the beginning of dissolution, and may at last, after the toils of life are over, end in that which is called death. And whether the soul enters into the body once only or many times, that, as you would say, makes no difference in the fears of individuals. For any man, who is not devoid of natural feeling, has reason to fear, if he has no knowledge or proof of the soul's immortality. That is what I suppose you to say, Cebes, which I designedly repeat, in order that nothing may escape us, and that you may, if you wish, add or subtract anything.

But, said Cebes, as far as I can see at present, I have nothing to add or subtract: you have expressed my meaning.

Socrates paused awhile, and seemed to be absorbed in reflection. At length he said: This is a very serious inquiry which you are raising, Cebes, involving the whole question of veneration and corruption, about which I will, if you like, give you my own experience; and you can apply this, if you think

that anything which I say will avail towards the solution of your difficulty.

I should very much like, said Cebes, to hear what you have to say.

Then I will tell you, said Socrates. When I was young, Cebes, I had a prodigious desire to know that department of philosophy which is called Natural Science; this appeared to me to have lofty aims, as being the science which has to do with the causes of things, and which teaches why a thing is, and is created and destroyed; and I was always agitating myself with the consideration of such questions as these: Is the growth of animals the result of some decay which the hot and cold principle contract, as some have said? Is the blood the element with which we think, or the air, or the fire? or perhaps nothing of this sort—but the brain may be the originating power of the perceptions of hearing and sight and smell, and memory and opinion may come from them, and science may be based on memory and opinion when no longer in motion, but at rest. And then I went on to examine the decay of them, and then to the things of heaven and earth, and at last I concluded that I was wholly incapable of these inquiries, as I will satisfactorily prove to you. For I was fascinated by them to such a degree that my eyes grew blind to things that I had seemed to myself, and also to others, to know quite well; and I forgot what I had before thought to be self-evident, that the growth of man is the result of eating and drinking; for when by the digestion of food flesh is added to flesh and bone to bone, and whenever there is an aggregation of congenial elements, the lesser bulk becomes larger and the small man greater. Was not that a reasonable notion?

Yes, said Cebes, I think so.

Well; but let me tell you something more. There was a time when I thought that I understood the meaning of greater and less pretty well; and when I saw a great man standing by a little one I fancied that one was taller than the other by a head, or one horse would appear to be greater than another horse: and still more clearly did I seem to perceive that ten is two more than eight, and that two cubits are more than one, because two is twice one.

And what is now your notion of such matters? said Cebes.

I should be far enough from imagining, he replied, that I knew the cause of any of them, indeed I should, for I cannot satisfy myself that when one is added to one, the one to which the addition is made becomes two, or that the two units added together make two by reason of the addition. For I cannot understand how, when separated from the other, each of them was one and not two, and now, when they are brought together, the mere juxtaposition of them can be the cause of their becoming two: nor can I understand how the division of one is the way to make two; for then a different cause would produce the same effect,—as in the former instance the addition and juxtaposition of one to one was the cause of two, in this the separation and subtraction of one from the other would be the cause. Nor am I any longer satisfied that I understand the reason why one or anything else either is generated or destroyed or is at all, but I have in my mind some confused notion of another method, and can never admit this.

Then I heard some one who had a book of Anaxagoras, as he said, out of which he read that mind was the disposer and cause of all, and I was quite delighted at the notion of this, which appeared admirable, and I said to myself: If mind is the disposer, mind will dispose all for the best, and put each particular in the best place: and I argued that if any one desired to find out the cause of the generation or destruction or existence of anything, he must find out what state of being or suffering or doing was best for that thing, and therefore a man had only to consider the best for himself and others, and then he would also know the worse, for that the same science comprised both. And I rejoiced to think that I had found in Anaxagoras a teacher of the causes of existence such as I desired, and I imagined that he would tell me first whether the earth is flat or round; and then he would further explain the cause and the necessity of this, and would teach me the nature of the best and show that this was best; and if he said that the earth was in the center, he would explain that this position was the best, and I should be satisfied if this were shown to me, and not want any other sort of cause. And I thought that I would then go on and ask him about

the sun and moon and stars, and that he would explain to me their comparative swiftness, and their returnings and various states, and how their several affections, active and passive, were all for the best. For I could not imagine that when he spoke of mind as the disposer of them, he would give any other account of their being as they are, except that this was best; and I thought that when he had explained to me in detail the cause of each and the cause of all, he would go on to explain to me what was best for each and what was best for all. I had hopes which I would not have sold for much, and I seized the books and read them as fast as I could in my eagerness to know the better and the worse.

What hopes I had formed, and how grievously was I disappointed! As I proceeded, I found my philosopher altogether forsaking mind or any other principle of order, but having recourse to air, and ether, and water, and other eccentricities. I might compare him to a person who began by maintaining generally that mind is the cause of the actions of Socrates, but who, when he endeavored to explain the causes of my several actions in detail, went on to show that I sit here because my body is made up of bones and muscles; and the bones, as he would say, are hard and have ligaments which divide them, and the muscles are elastic, and they cover the bones, which have also a covering or environment of flesh and skin which contains them; and as the bones are lifted at their joints by the contraction or relaxation of the muscles, I am able to bend my limbs, and this is why I am sitting here in a curved posture: that is what he would say, and he would have a similar explanation of my talking to you, which he would attribute to sound, and air, and hearing, and he would assign ten thousand other causes of the same sort, forgetting to mention the true cause, which is that the Athenians have thought fit to condemn me, and accordingly I have thought it better and more right to remain here and undergo my sentence; for I am inclined to think that these muscles and bones of mine would have gone off to Megara<sup>1</sup> or Boeotia,—by the dog of Egypt they would, if they had

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<sup>1</sup> A town twenty miles from Athens.



been guided only by their own idea of what was best, and if I had not chosen as the better and nobler part, instead of playing truant and running away, to undergo any punishment which the State inflicts. There is surely a strange confusion of causes and conditions in all this. It may be said, indeed, that without bones and muscles and the other parts of the body I cannot execute my purposes. But to say that I do as I do because of them, and that this is the way in which mind acts, and not from the choice of the best, is a very careless and idle mode of speaking. I wonder that they cannot distinguish the cause from the condition, which the many, feeling about in the dark, are always mistaking and misnaming. And thus one man makes a vortex all round and steadies the earth by the heaven; another gives the air as a support to the earth, which is a sort of broad trough. Any power which in disposing them as they are disposes them for the best never enters into their minds, nor do they imagine that there is any super-human strength in that; they rather expect to find another Atlas of the world who is stronger and more everlasting and more containing than the good is, and are clearly of opinion that the obligatory and containing power of the good is as nothing; and yet this is the principle which I would fain learn if any one would teach me. But as I have failed either to discover myself, or to learn of any one else, the nature of the best, I will exhibit to you, if you like, what I have found to be the second best mode of inquiring into the cause.

I should very much like to hear that, he replied.

Socrates proceeded: I thought that as I had failed in the contemplation of true existence, I ought to be careful that I did not lose the eye of my soul; as people may injure their bodily eye by observing and gazing on the sun during an eclipse, unless they take the precaution of only looking at the image reflected in the water, or in some similar medium. That occurred to me, and I was afraid that my soul might be blinded altogether if I looked at things with my eyes or tried by the help of the senses to apprehend them. And I thought that I had better have recourse to ideas, and seek in them the truth of existence. I dare say that the simile is not perfect—for I am very far from admitting that he who contemplates



existences through the medium of ideas, sees them only "through a glass darkly," any more than he who sees them in their working and effects. However, this was the method which I adopted: I first assumed some principle which I judged to be the strongest, and then I affirmed as true whatever seemed to agree with this, whether relating to the cause or to anything else; and that which disagreed I regarded as untrue. But I should like to explain my meaning clearly, as I do not think that you understand me.

No, indeed, replied Cebes, not very well.

There is nothing new, he said, in what I am about to tell you; but only what I have been always and everywhere repeating in the previous discussion and on other occasions: I want to show you the nature of that cause which has occupied my thoughts, and I shall have to go back to those familiar words which are in the mouth of every one, and first of all assume that there is an absolute beauty and goodness, and greatness, and the like; grant me this, and I hope to be able to show you the nature of the cause, and to prove the immortality of the soul.

Cebes said: You may proceed at once with the proof, as I readily grant you this.

Well, he said, then I should like to know whether you agree with me in the next step; for I cannot help thinking that if there be anything beautiful other than absolute beauty, that can only be beautiful in as far as it partakes of absolute beauty—and this I should say of everything. Do you agree in this notion of the cause?

Yes, he said, I agree.

He proceeded: I know nothing and can understand nothing of any other of those wise causes which are alleged; and if a person says to me that the bloom of color, or form, or anything else of that sort is a source of beauty, I leave all that, which is only confusing to me, and simply and singly, and perhaps foolishly, hold and am assured in my own mind that nothing makes a thing beautiful but the presence and participation of beauty in whatever way or manner obtained; for as to the manner I am uncertain, but I stoutly contend that by beauty all beautiful things become beautiful. That

appears to me to be the only safe answer that I can give, either to myself or to any other, and to that I cling, in the persuasion that I shall never be overthrown, and that I may safely answer to myself or any other that by beauty beautiful things become beautiful. Do you not agree to that?

Yes, I agree.

And that by greatness only great things become great and greater greater, and by smallness the less becomes less.

True.

Then if a person remarks that A is taller by a head than B, and B less by a head than A, you would refuse to admit this, and would stoutly contend that what you mean is only that the greater is greater by, and by reason of, greatness, and the less is less only by, or by reason of, smallness; and thus you would avoid the danger of saying that the greater is greater and the less less by the measure of the head, which is the same in both, and would also avoid the monstrous absurdity of supposing that the greater man is greater by reason of the head, which is small. Would you not be afraid of that?

Indeed, I should, said Cebes, laughing.

In like manner you would be afraid to say that ten exceeded eight by, and by reason of, two; but would say by, and by reason of, number; or that two cubits exceed one cubit by a half, but by magnitude;—that is what you would say, for there is the same danger in both cases.

Very true, he said.

Again, would you not be cautious of affirming that the addition of one to one, or the division of one, is the cause of two? And you would loudly asseverate that you know of no way in which anything comes into existence except by participation in its own proper essence, and consequently, as far as you know, the only cause of two is the participation in duality; that is, the way to make two, and the participation in one is the way to make one. You would say: I will let alone puzzles of division and addition—wiser heads than mine may answer them; inexperienced as I am and ready to start, as the proverb says, at my own shadow, I cannot afford to give up the sure ground of a principle. And if any one

assails you there, you would not mind him, or answer him until you had seen whether the consequences which follow agree with one another or not, and when you are further required to give an explanation of this principle, you would go on to assume a higher principle, and the best of the higher ones until you found a resting-place; but you would not confuse the principle and the consequences in your reasoning, like the Eristics—at least if you wanted to discover real existence. Not that this confusion signifies to them who never care or think about the matter at all, for they have the wit to be well pleased with themselves, however great may be the turmoil of their ideas. But you, if you are a philosopher, will, I believe, do as I say.

What you say is most true, said Simmias and Cebes, both speaking at once.

*Ech.* Yes, Phædo; and I don't wonder at their assenting. Any one who has the least sense will acknowledge the wonderful clearness of Socrates's reasoning.

*Phad.* Certainly, Echecrates; and that was the feeling of the whole company at the time.

*Ech.* Yes, and equally of ourselves, who were not of the company, and are now listening to your recital. But what followed?

*Phad.* After all this was admitted, and they had agreed about the existence of ideas and the participation in them of the other things which derive their names from them, Socrates, if I remember rightly, said:—

This is your way of speaking; and yet when you say that Simmias is greater than Socrates and less than Phædo, do you not predicate of Simmias both greatness and smallness?

Yes, I do.

But still you allow that Simmias does not really exceed Socrates, as the words may seem to imply, because he is Simmias, but by reason of the size which he has; just as Simmias does not exceed Socrates because he is Simmias, any more than because Socrates is Socrates, but because he has smallness when compared with the greatness of Simmias?

True.

And if Phædo exceeds him in size, that is not because

Phædo is Phædo, but because Phædo has greatness relatively to Simmias, who is comparatively smaller?

That is true.

And therefore Simmias is said to be great, and is also said to be small, because he is in a mean between them, exceeding the smallness of the one by his greatness, and allowing the greatness of the other to exceed his smallness. He added, laughing, I am speaking like a book, but I believe that what I am saying is true.

Simmias assented to this.

The reason why I say this is that I want you to agree with me in thinking, not only that absolute greatness will never be great and also small, but that greatness in us or in the concrete will never admit the small or admit of being exceeded: instead of this, one of two things will happen,—either the greater will fly or retire before the opposite, which is the less, or at the advance of the less will cease to exist; but will not, if allowing or admitting smallness, be changed by that; even as I, having received and admitted smallness when compared with Simmias, remain just as I was, and am the same small person. And as the idea of greatness cannot condescend ever to be or become small, in like manner the smallness in us cannot be or become great; nor can any other opposite which remains the same ever be or become its own opposite, but either passes away or perishes in the change.

That, replied Cebes, is quite my notion.

One of the company, though I do not exactly remember which of them, on hearing this, said: By Heaven, is not this the direct contrary of what was admitted before—that out of the greater came the less and out of the less the greater, and that opposites were simply generated from opposites; whereas now this seems to be utterly denied.

Socrates inclined his head to the speaker and listened. I like your courage, he said, in reminding us of this. But you do not observe that there is a difference in the two cases. For then we were speaking of opposites in the concrete, and now of the essential opposite which, as is affirmed, neither in us nor in nature can ever be at variance with itself: then, my friend, we were speaking of things in which opposites are

inherent and which are called after them, but now about the opposites which are inherent in them and which give their name to them; these essential opposites will never, as we maintain, admit of generation into or out of one another. At the same time, turning to Cebes, he said: Were you at all disconcerted, Cebes, at our friend's objection?

That was not my feeling, said Cebes; and yet I cannot deny that I am apt to be disconcerted.

Then we are agreed after all, said Socrates, that the opposite will never in any case be opposed to itself?

To that we are quite agreed, he replied.

Yet once more let me ask you to consider the question from another point of view, and see whether you agree with me: There is a thing which you term heat, and another thing which you term cold?

Certainly.

But are they the same as fire and snow?

Most assuredly not.

Heat is not the same as fire, nor is cold the same as snow?

No.

And yet you will surely admit that when snow, as was before said, is under the influence of heat, they will not remain snow and heat; but at the advance of the heat the snow will either retire or perish?

Very true, he replied.

And the fire too at the advance of the cold will either retire or perish; and when the fire is under the influence of the cold, they will not remain as before, fire and cold.

That is true, he said.

And in some cases the name of the idea is not confined to the idea; but anything else which, not being the idea, exists only in the form of the idea, may also lay claim to it. I will try to make this clearer by an example: The odd number is always called by the name of odd?

Very true.

But is this the only thing which is called odd? Are there not other things which have their own name, and yet are called odd, because, although not the same as oddness, they are never without oddness?—that is what I mean to ask—



whether numbers such as the number three are not of the class of odd. And there are many other examples: would you not say, for example, that three may be called by its proper name, and also be called odd, which is not the same with three? and this may be said not only of three but also of five, and every alternate number—each of them without being oddness is odd, and in the same way two and four, and the whole series of alternate numbers, has every number even, without being evenness. Do you admit that?

Yes, he said, how can I deny that?

Then now mark the point at which I am aiming: not only do essential opposites exclude one another, but also concrete things, which, although not in themselves opposed, contain opposites: these, I say, also reject the idea which is opposed to that which is contained in them, and at the advance of that they either perish or withdraw. There is the number three for example; will not that endure annihilation or anything sooner than be converted into an even number, remaining three?

Very true, said Cebes.

And yet, he said, the number two is certainly not opposed to the number three?

It is not.

Then not only do opposite ideas repel the advance of one another, but also there are other things which repel the approach of opposites.

That is quite true, he said.

Suppose, he said, that we endeavor, if possible, to determine what these are.

By all means.

Are they not, Cebes, such as compel the things of which they have possession, not only to take their own form, but also the form of some opposite?

What do you mean?

I mean, as I was just now saying, and have no need to repeat to you, that those things which are possessed by the number three must not only be three in number, but must also be odd.

Quite true.

And on this oddness, of which the number three has the impress, the opposite idea will never intrude?

No.

And this impress was given by the odd principle?

Yes.

And to the odd is opposed the even?

True.

Then the idea of the even number will never arrive at three?

No.

Then three has no part in the even?

None.

Then the triad or number three is uneven?

Very true.

To return then to my distinction of natures which are not opposites, and yet do not admit opposites: as in this instance, three, although not opposed to the even, does not any the more admit of the even, but always brings the opposite into play on the other side; or as two does not receive the odd, or fire the cold—from these examples (and there are many more of them) perhaps you may be able to arrive at the general conclusion that not only opposites will not receive opposites, but also that nothing which brings the opposite will admit the opposite of that which it brings in that to which it is brought. And here let me recapitulate—for there is no harm in repetition. The number five will not admit the nature of the even, any more than ten, which is the double of five, will admit the nature of the odd—the double, though not strictly opposed to the odd, rejects the odd altogether. Nor again will parts in the ratio of 3 : 2, nor any fraction in which there is a half, nor again in which there is a third, admit the notion of the whole, although they are not opposed to the whole. You will agree to that?

Yes, he said, I entirely agree and go along with you in that.

And now, he said, I think that I may begin again; and to the question which I am about to ask I will beg you to give not the old safe answer, but another, of which I will offer you an example; and I hope that you will find in what has

been just said another foundation which is as safe. I mean that if any one asks you "What that is, the inherence of which makes the body hot?" you will reply not heat (this is what I call the safe and stupid answer), but fire, a far better answer, which we are now in a condition to give. Or if any one asks you "Why a body is diseased," you will not say from disease, but from fever; and instead of saying that oddness is the cause of odd numbers, you will say that the monad is the cause of them; and so of things in general, as I dare say that you will understand sufficiently without my adducing any further examples.

Yes, he said, I quite understand you.

Tell me, then, what is that the inherence of which will render the body alive?

The soul, he replied.

And is this always the case?

Yes, he said, of course.

Then whatever the soul possesses, to that she comes bearing life?

Yes, certainly.

And is there any opposite to life?

There is, he said.

And what is that?

Death.

Then the soul, as has been acknowledged, will never receive the opposite of what she brings. And now, he said, what did we call that principle which repels the even?

The odd.

And that principle which repels the musical, or the just?

The unmusical, he said, and unjust.

And what do we call that principle which does not admit of death?

The immortal, he said.

And does the soul admit of death?

No.

Then the soul is immortal?

Yes, he said.

And may we say that this is proven?

Yes, abundantly proven, Socrates, he replied.

And supposing that the odd were imperishable, must not three be imperishable?

Of course.

And if that which is cold were imperishable, when the warm principle came attacking the snow, must not the snow have retired whole and unmelted—for it could never have perished, nor could it have remained and admitted the heat?

True, he said.

Again, if the uncooling or warm principle were imperishable, the fire when assailed by cold would not have perished or have been extinguished, but would have gone away unaffected?

Certainly, he said.

And the same may be said of the immortal: if the immortal is also imperishable, the soul when attacked by death cannot perish; for the preceding argument shows that the soul will not admit of death, or ever be dead, any more than three or the odd number will admit of the even, or fire, or the heat in the fire, of the cold. Yet a person may say: "But although the odd will not become even at the approach of the even, why may not the odd perish and the even take the place of the odd?" Now to him who makes this objection, we cannot answer that the odd principle is imperishable; for this has not been acknowledged, but if this had been acknowledged, there would have been no difficulty in contending that at the approach of the even the odd principle and the number three took up their departure; and the same argument would have held good of fire and heat and any other thing.

Very true.

And the same may be said of the immortal: if the immortal is also imperishable, then the soul will be imperishable as well as immortal; but if not, some other proof of her imperishableness will have to be given.

No other proof is needed, he said; for if the immortal, being eternal, is liable to perish, then nothing is imperishable.

Yes, replied Socrates, all men will agree that God, and the essential form of life, and the immortal in general will never perish.

Yes, all men, he said,—that is true; and what is more, gods, if I am not mistaken, as well as men.

Seeing then that the immortal is indestructible, must not the soul, if she is immortal, be also imperishable?

Most certainly.

Then when death attacks a man, the mortal portion of him may be supposed to die, but the immortal goes out of the way of death and is preserved safe and sound?

True.

Then, Cebes, beyond question the soul is immortal and imperishable, and our souls will truly exist in another world!

I am convinced, Socrates, said Cebes, and have nothing more to object; but if my friend Simmias, or any one else, has any further objection, he had better speak out, and not keep silence, since I do not know how there can ever be a more fitting time to which he can defer the discussion, if there is anything which he wants to say or have said.

But I have nothing more to say, replied Simmias; nor do I see any room for uncertainty, except that which arises necessarily out of the greatness of the subject and the feebleness of man, and which I cannot help feeling.

Yes, Simmias, replied Socrates, that is well said: and more than that, first principles, even if they appear certain, should be carefully considered; and when they are satisfactorily ascertained, then, with a sort of hesitating confidence in human reason, you may, I think, follow the course of the argument; and if this is clear, there will be no need for any further inquiry.

That, he said, is true.

But then, O my friends, he said, if the soul is really immortal, what care should be taken of her, not only in respect of the portion of time which is called life, but of eternity! And the danger of neglecting her from this point of view does indeed appear to be awful. If death had only been the end of all, the wicked would have had a good bargain in dying, for they would have been happily quit not only of their body, but of their own evil together with their souls. But now, as the soul plainly appears to be immortal, there is no release or salvation from evil except the attainment of the highest



virtue and wisdom. For the soul when on her progress to the world below takes nothing with her but nurture and education; which are indeed said greatly to benefit or greatly to injure the departed, at the very beginning of his pilgrimage in the other world.

For after death, as they say, the genius of each individual, to whom he belonged in life, leads him to a certain place in which the dead are gathered together for judgment, whence they go into the world below, following the guide who is appointed to conduct them from this world to the other: and when they have there received their due and remained their time, another guide brings them back again after many revolutions of ages. Now this journey to the other world is not, as Æschylus says in the "Telephus,"<sup>1</sup> a single and straight path,—no guide would be wanted for that, and no one could miss a single path; but there are many partings of the road, and windings, as I must infer from the rites and sacrifices which are offered to the gods below in places where three ways meet on earth.<sup>2</sup> The wise and orderly soul is conscious of her situation, and follows in the path; but the soul which desires the body, and which, as I was relating before, has long been fluttering about the lifeless frame and the world of sight, is after many struggles and many sufferings hardly and with violence carried away by her attendant genius, and when she arrives at the place where the other souls are gathered, if she be impure and have done impure deeds, or been concerned in foul murders or other crimes which are the brothers of these, and the works of brothers in crime,—from that soul every one flees and turns away; no one will be her companion, no one her guide, but alone she wanders in extremity of evil until certain times are fulfilled, and when they are fulfilled, she is borne irresistibly to her own fitting habitation; as every pure and just soul which has passed through life in the company and under the guidance of the gods has also her own proper home.

Now the earth has divers wonderful regions, and is indeed

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<sup>1</sup> A lost tragedy.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Idyl II of Theocritus, in Volume III.

in nature and extent very unlike the notions of geographers as I believe on the authority of one who shall be nameless.

What do you mean, Socrates? said Simmias. I have myself heard many descriptions of the earth, but I do not know in what you are putting your faith, and I should like to know.

Well, Simmias, replied Socrates, the recital of a tale does not, I think, require the art of Glaucus; and I know not that the art of Glaucus could prove the truth of my tale, which I myself should never be able to prove, and even if I could, I fear, Simmias, that my life would come to an end before the argument was completed. I may describe to you, however, the form and regions of the earth according to my conception of them.

That, said Simmias, will be enough.

Well, then, he said, my conviction is that the earth is a round body in the center of the heavens, and therefore has no need of air or any similar force as a support, but is kept there and hindered from falling or inclining any way by the equability of the surrounding heaven and by her own equipoise. For that which, being in equipoise, is in the center of that which is equably diffused, will not incline any way in any degree, but will always remain in the same state and not deviate. And this is my first notion.

Which is surely a correct one, said Simmias.

Also I believe that the earth is very vast, and that we who dwell in the region extending from the river Phasis to the Pillars of Heracles, along the borders of the sea, are just like ants or frogs about a marsh, and inhabit a small portion only, and that many others dwell in many like places. For I should say that in all parts of the earth there are hollows of various forms and sizes, into which the water and the mist and the air collect; and that the true earth is pure and in the pure heaven, in which also are the stars—that is the heaven which is commonly spoken of as the ether, of which this is but the sediment collecting in the hollows of the earth. But we who live in these hollows are deceived into the notion that we are dwelling above on the surface of the earth; which is just as if a creature who was at the bottom of the sea were to fancy that he was on the surface of the water, and that the sea

was the heaven through which he saw the sun and the other stars,—he having never come to the surface by reason of his feebleness and sluggishness, and having never lifted up his head and seen, nor ever heard from one who had seen, this other region which is so much purer and fairer than his own. Now this is exactly our case: for we are dwelling in a hollow of the earth, and fancy that we are on the surface; and the air we call the heaven, and in this we imagine that the stars move. But this is also owing to our feebleness and sluggishness, which prevent our reaching the surface of the air: for if any man could arrive at the exterior limit, or take the wings of a bird and fly upward, like a fish who puts his head out and sees this world, he would see a world beyond; and, if the nature of man could sustain the sight, he would acknowledge that this was the place of the true heaven and the true light and the true stars. For this earth, and the stones, and the entire region which surrounds us are spoilt and corroded, like the things in the sea which are corroded by the brine; for in the sea too there is hardly any noble or perfect growth, but clefts only, and sand, and an endless slough of mud: and even the shore is not to be compared to the fairer sights of this world. And greater far is the superiority of the other. Now of that upper earth which is under the heaven, I can tell you a charming tale, Simmias, which is well worth hearing.

And we, Socrates, replied Simmias, shall be charmed to listen.

The tale, my friend, he said, is as follows. In the first place, the earth, when looked at from above, is like one of those balls which have leather coverings in twelve pieces, and is of divers colors, of which the colors which painters use on earth are only a sample. But there the whole earth is made up of them, and they are brighter far and clearer than ours; there is a purple of wonderful luster, also the radiance of gold, and the white which is in the earth is whiter than any chalk or snow. Of these and other colors the earth is made up, and they are more in number and fairer than the eye of man has ever seen; and the very hollows (of which I was speaking) filled with air and water are seen like light flashing amid the other colors, and have a color of their own, which gives a sort

of unity to the variety of earth. And in this fair region everything that grows—trees, and flowers, and fruits—is in a like degree fairer than any here; and there are hills, and stones in them in a like degree smoother, and more transparent, and fairer in color than our highly valued emeralds and sardonyxes and jaspers, and other gems, which are but minute fragments of them: for there all the stones are like our precious stones, and fairer still. The reason of this is that they are pure, and not, like our precious stones, infected or corroded by the corrupt briny elements which coagulate among us, and which breed foulness and disease both in earth and stones, as well as in animals and plants. They are the jewels of the upper earth, which also shines with gold and silver and the like, and they are visible to sight and large and abundant and found in every region of the earth, and blessed is he who sees them. And upon the earth are animals and men, some in a middle region, others dwelling about the air as we dwell about the sea; others in islands which the air flows round, near the continent: and in a word, the air is used by them as the water and the sea are by us, and the ether is to them what the air is to us. Moreover, the temperament of their seasons is such that they have no disease, and live much longer than we do, and have sight and hearing and smell, and all the other senses, in far greater perfection, in the same degree that air is purer than water or the ether than air. Also they have temples and sacred places in which the gods really dwell, and they hear their voices and receive their answers, and are conscious of them and hold converse with them, and they see the sun, moon, and stars as they really are, and their other blessedness is of a piece with this.

Such is the nature of the whole earth, and of the things which are around the earth; and there are divers regions in the hollows on the face of the globe everywhere, some of them deeper and also wider than that which we inhabit, others deeper and with a narrower opening than ours, and some are shallower and wider; all have numerous perforations, and passages broad and narrow in the interior of the earth, connecting them with one another; and there flows into and out of them, as into basins, a vast tide of water, and huge subter-



anean streams of perennial rivers, and springs hot and cold, and a great fire, and great rivers of fire, and streams of liquid mud, thin or thick (like the rivers of mud in Sicily, and the lava streams which follow them), and the regions about which they happen to flow are filled up with them. And there is a sort of swing in the interior of the earth which moves all this up and down. Now the swing is in this wise: There is a chasm which is the vastest of them all, and pierces right through the whole earth; this is that which Homer describes in the words,—

Far off, where is the inmost depth beneath the earth;

and which he in other places, and many other poets, have called Tartarus. And the swing is caused by the streams flowing into and out of this chasm, and they each have the nature of the soil through which they flow. And the reason why the streams are always flowing in and out is that the watery element has no bed or bottom, and is surging and swinging up and down, and the surrounding wind and air do the same; they follow the water up and down, hither and thither, over the earth—just as in respiring the air is always in process of inhalation and exhalation; and the wind swinging with the water in and out produces fearful and irresistible blasts: when the waters retire with a rush into the lower parts of the earth, as they are called, they flow through the earth into those regions, and fill them up as with the alternate motion of a pump, and then when they leave those regions and rush back hither, they again fill the hollows here, and when these are filled, flow through subterranean channels and find their way to their several places, forming seas, and lakes, and rivers, and springs. Thence they again enter the earth, some of them making a long circuit into many lands, others going to few places and those not distant, and again fall into Tartarus, some at a point a good deal lower than that at which they rose, and others not much lower, but all in some degree lower than the point of issue. And some burst forth again on the opposite side, and some on the same side, and some wind round the earth with one or many folds, like the coils of a serpent, and descend as far as they can, but always return



and fall into the lake. The rivers on either side can descend only to the center and no further, for to the rivers on both sides the opposite side is a precipice.

Now these rivers are many, and mighty, and diverse, and there are four principal ones, of which the greatest and outermost is that called Oceanus, which flows round the earth in a circle; and in the opposite direction flows Acheron, which passes under the earth through desert places, into the Acherusian lake: this is the lake to the shores of which the souls of the many go when they are dead, and after waiting an appointed time, which is to some a longer and to some a shorter time, they are sent back again to be born as animals. The third river rises between the two, and near the place of rising pours into a vast region of fire, and forms a lake larger than the Mediterranean Sea, boiling with water and mud; and proceeding muddy and turbid, and winding about the earth, comes, among other places, to the extremities of the Acherusian lake, but mingles not with the waters of the lake, and after making many coils about the earth plunges into Tartarus at a deeper level. This is that Pyriphlegethon, as the stream is called, which throws up jets of fire in all sorts of places. The fourth river goes out on the opposite side, and falls first of all into a wild and savage region, which is all of a dark blue color, like lapis lazuli; and this is that river which is called the Stygian river, and falls into and forms the lake Styx, and after falling into the lake and receiving strange powers in the waters, passes under the earth, winding round in the opposite direction to Pyriphlegethon, and meeting in the Acherusian lake from the opposite side. And the water of this river too mingles with no other, but flows round in a circle and falls into Tartarus over against Pyriphlegethon; and the name of this river, as the poets say, is Cocytus.

Such is the nature of the other world; and when the dead arrive at the place to which the genius of each severally conveys them, first of all they have sentence passed upon them, as they have lived well and piously or not. And those who appear to have lived neither well nor ill, go to the river Acheron, and mount such conveyances as they can get, and are carried in them to the lake, and there they dwell and are

purified of their evil deeds, and suffer the penalty of the wrongs which they have done to others, and are absolved and receive the rewards of their good deeds according to their deserts. But those who appear to be incurable by reason of the greatness of their crimes,—who have committed many and terrible deeds of sacrilege, murders foul and violent, or the like,—such are hurled into Tartarus, which is their suitable destiny, and they never come out. Those again who have committed crimes, which, although great, are not unpardonable,—who in a moment of anger, for example, have done violence to a father or a mother, and have repented for the remainder of their lives, or who have taken the life of another under the like extenuating circumstances,—these are plunged into Tartarus, the pains of which they are compelled to undergo for a year, but at the end of the year the wave casts them forth,—mere homicides by way of Cocytus, parricides and matricides by Pyriphlegethon,—and they are borne to the Acherusian lake, and there they lift up their voices and call upon the victims whom they have slain or wronged, to have pity on them, and to receive them, and to let them come out of the river into the lake. And if they prevail, then they come forth and cease from their troubles; but if not, they are carried back again into Tartarus and from thence into the rivers unceasingly, until they obtain mercy from those whom they have wronged: for that is the sentence inflicted upon them by their judges. Those also who are remarkable for having led holy lives are released from this earthly prison, and go to their pure home which is above, and dwell in the purer earth; and those who have duly purified themselves with philosophy live henceforth altogether without the body, in mansions fairer far than these, which may not be described, and of which the time would fail me to tell.

Wherefore, Simmias, seeing all these things, what ought not we to do in order to obtain virtue and wisdom in this life? Fair is the prize, and the hope great.

I do not mean to affirm that the description which I have given of the soul and her mansions is exactly true—a man of sense ought hardly to say that. But I do say that, inasmuch as the soul is shown to be immortal, he may venture

to think, not improperly or unworthily, that something of the kind is true. The venture is a glorious one, and he ought to comfort himself with words like these, which is the reason why I lengthen out the tale. Wherefore, I say, let a man be of good cheer about his soul, who has cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him, and rather hurtful in their effects, and has followed after the pleasures of knowledge in this life; who has adorned the soul in her own proper jewels, which are temperance, and justice, and courage, and nobility, and truth—in these arrayed she is ready to go on her journey to the world below, when her time comes. You, Simmias and Cebes, and all other men, will depart at some time or other. Me already, as the tragic poet would say, the voice of fate calls. Soon I must drink the poison; and I think that I had better repair to the bath first, in order that the women may not have the trouble of washing **my body after I am dead.**

When he had done speaking, Crito said: And have you any commands for us, Socrates,—anything to say about your children, or any other matter in which we can serve you?

Nothing particular, he said: only, as I have always told you, I would have you to look to yourselves; that is a service which you may always be doing to me and mine as well as to yourselves. And you need not make professions; for if you take no thought for yourselves, and walk not according to the precepts which I have given you, not now for the first time, the warmth of your professions will be of no avail.

We will do our best, said Crito. But in what way would **you have us bury you?**

In any way that you like; only you must get hold of me, and take care that I do not walk away from you. Then he turned to us, and added with a smile: I cannot make Crito believe that I am the same Socrates who have been talking and conducting the argument; he fancies that I am the other Socrates whom he will soon see, a dead body—and he asks, **How shall he bury me?** And though I have spoken many words in the endeavor to show that when I have drunk the poison I shall leave you and go to the joys of the blessed,—these words of mine, with which I comforted you and myself,

have had, as I perceive, no effect upon Crito. And therefore I want you to be surety for me now, as he was surety for me at the trial: but let the promise be of another sort; for he was my surety to the judges that I would remain, but you must be my surety to him that I shall not remain, but go away and depart; and then he will suffer less at my death, and not be grieved when he sees my body being burned or buried. I would not have him sorrow at my hard lot, or say at the burial, Thus we lay out Socrates, or, Thus we follow him to the grave or bury him; for false words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil. Be of good cheer, then, my dear Crito, and say that you are burying my body only, and do with that as is usual, and as you think best.

When he had spoken these words, he arose and went into the bath chamber with Crito, who bade us wait; and we waited, talking and thinking of the subject of discourse, and also of the greatness of our sorrow; he was like a father of whom we were being bereaved, and we were about to pass the rest of our lives as orphans. When he had taken the bath his children were brought to him—he had two young sons and an elder one; and the women of his family also came, and he talked to them and gave them a few directions in the presence of Crito; and he then dismissed them and returned to us.

Now the hour of sunset was near, for a good deal of time had passed while he was within. When he came out, he sat down with us again after his bath, but not much was said. Soon the jailer, who was the servant of the eleven, entered and stood by him, saying; To you, Socrates, whom I know to be the noblest and gentlest and best of all who ever came to this place, I will not impute the angry feelings of other men, who rage and swear at me when, in obedience to the authorities, I bid them drink the poison—indeed I am sure that you will not be angry with me; for others, as you are aware, and not I, are the guilty cause. And so fare you well, and try to bear lightly what must needs be; you know my errand. Then bursting into tears he turned away and went out.

Socrates looked at him and said: I return your good wishes, and will do as you bid. Then, turning to us, he said,



How charming the man is: since I have been in prison he has always been coming to see me, and at times he would talk to me, and was as good as could be to me, and now see how generously he sorrows for me. But we must do as he says, Crito; let the cup be brought, if the poison is prepared: if not, let the attendant prepare some.

Yet, said Crito, the sun is still upon the hilltops, and many a one has taken the draught late, and after the announcement has been made to him, he has eaten and drunk, and indulged in sensual delights; do not hasten, then, there is still time.

Socrates said: Yes, Crito, and they of whom you speak are right in doing thus, for they think that they will gain by the delay; but I am right in not doing thus, for I do not think that I should gain anything by drinking the poison a little later; I should be sparing and saving a life which is already gone: I could only laugh at myself for this. Please then to do as I say, and not to refuse me.

Crito, when he heard this, made a sign to the servant; and the servant went in, and remained for some time, and then returned with the jailer carrying the cup of poison. Socrates said: You, my good friend, who are experienced in these matters, shall give me directions how I am to proceed. The man answered: You have only to walk about until your legs are heavy, and then to lie down, and the poison will act. At the same time he handed the cup to Socrates, who in the easiest and gentlest manner, without the least fear or change of color or feature, looking at the man with all his eyes, Echecrates, as his manner was, took the cup and said: What do you say about making a libation out of this cup to any god? May I, or not? The man answered: We only prepare, Socrates, just so much as we deem enough. I understand, he said: yet I may and must pray to the gods to prosper my journey from this to that other world—may this, then, which is my prayer, be granted to me. Then holding the cup to his lips, quite readily and cheerfully he drank off the poison. And hitherto most of us had been able to control our sorrow; but now when we saw him drinking, and saw too that he had finished the draught, we could no longer forbear, and in spite of myself my own tears were flowing



fast; so that I covered my face and wept over myself, for certainly I was not weeping over him, but at the thought of my own calamity in having lost such a companion. Nor was I the first, for Crito, when he found himself unable to restrain his tears, had got up and moved away, and I followed; and at that moment, Apollodorus, who had been weeping all the time, broke out into a loud cry which made cowards of us all. Socrates alone retained his calmness: What is this strange outcry? he said. I sent away the women mainly in order that they might not offend in this way, for I have heard that a man should die in peace. Be quiet, then, and have patience.

When we heard that, we were ashamed, and refrained our tears; and he walked about until, as he said, his legs began to fail, and then he lay on his back, according to the directions, and the man who gave him the poison now and then looked at his feet and legs; and after a while he pressed his foot hard and asked him if he could feel; and he said, no; and then his leg, and so upwards and upwards, and showed us that he was cold and stiff. And he felt them himself, and said: When the poison reaches the heart, that will be the end. He was beginning to grow cold about the groin, when he uncovered his face, for he had covered himself up, and said (they were his last words)—he said: Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius<sup>1</sup>; will you remember to pay the debt? The debt shall be paid, said Crito; is there anything else? There was no answer to this question; but in a minute or two a movement was heard, and the attendants uncovered him; his eyes were set, and Crito closed his eyes and mouth.

Such was the end, Echecrates, of our friend, whom I may truly call the wisest, and justest, and best of all the men whom I have ever known.

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<sup>1</sup> What Socrates meant by this his last speech is doubtful. Some hold that he had actually made a vow to Æsculapius (or Asclepius), and that he did not wish to die with any religious duty unfulfilled. Others hold that he used the language figuratively, meaning to say that he was now cured of the worst possible malady, the earthly life, and that he owed thanks to God for this cure.

ARISTOTLE'S  
ART OF POETRY

TRANSLATED BY  
THOMAS TWINING, M.A.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION UPON  
THE LIFE OF ARISTOTLE  
BY SIR ALEXANDER GRANT, LL.D.  
PRINCIPAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH



## INTRODUCTION

### THE LIFE OF ARISTOTLE

THE dates of the chief events in the life of Aristotle, extracted from the 'Chronology' of Apollodorus (140 B.C.), have been handed down to us by Diogenes Laertius in his 'Lives of the Philosophers;' and from various other sources it is possible to fill in the outline thus afforded, if not with certain facts, at all events with reasonable probabilities. Aristotle's own writings are almost entirely devoid of personal references, yet in them we can trace, to some extent, the progress and development of his mind. On the whole, we know quite as much about him, personally, as about most of the ancient Greek writers.

Aristotle was born in the year 384 B.C., at Stageira, a Grecian colony and seaport town on the Strymonic Gulf in Thrace, not far from Mount Athos—and what is more important, not far from the frontier of Macedonia, and from Pella, the residence of the Macedonian King Amyntas. To Stageira, his birth-place, he owed the world-famous appellation of "the Stagirite," given to him by scholiasts and schoolmen in later days. His father, Nicomachus, was physician to King Amyntas, and it is possible that the youthful Aristotle was taken at times to the court, and thus made the acquaintance of his future patron, Philip of Macedon, who was about his own age. There is one significant tradition about Aristotle which suggests circumstances likely to have produced in early life a considerable influence upon his habits and pursuits. His father is said to have been an "Asclepiad,"—that is, he belonged to that distinguished caste who claimed to be the descendants of Esculapius. Now we have it, on the authority of Galen, that "it was the custom in Asclepiad families for the boys to be trained by their father in the practice of dissection, just as regularly as boys in other families learn to read and write," so we may safely conclude that he received

from his father an hereditary tendency towards physiological study. But in addition to this tendency, Aristotle must doubtless have early manifested an interest in, and capacity for, abstract philosophy.

We now come to the second epoch in his life. About the year 367 B.C., when he was seventeen years old, his father having recently died, he was sent by his guardian, Proxenus of Atarneus, to complete his studies at Athens, "the metropolis of wisdom." There he continued to reside for twenty years, during the greater part of which time he attended the school of philosophy which Plato had founded in the olive groves of Academus, on the banks of the Cephissus. He had probably inherited from his father means sufficient for his support, so that he could live without care for the acquirement of anything save knowledge. But in the acquisition of this he manifested a zeal unsurpassed in the annals of study. Among his fellow-pupils in the Academe, he is said to have got the *sobriquet* of "the Reader;" while Plato himself called him "the Mind of the School," in recognition of his quick and powerful intelligence. In order to win time, even from sleep, Aristotle is said to have invented the plan of sleeping with a ball in his hand, so held over a brazen dish, that whenever his grasp relaxed the ball would descend with a clang, and arouse him to the resumption of his labours.

Plato's philosophy was absolutely pre-eminent in Greece at this time. It embodied within itself all that was best in the doctrine and the spirit of Socrates, and beyond it there was nothing, except the mystical theories of the Pythagoreans (the best elements in which Plato had assimilated), and the materialistic theories of the Atomists, which Plato, and afterwards Aristotle, controverted. The writings of Aristotle are quite consistent with the tradition that he was for twenty years a pupil of the Academic school. They show a long list of thoughts and expressions borrowed from the works of Plato, and also not unfrequently refer to the oral teaching of Plato. They contain a logical, ethical, political, and metaphysical philosophy, which is evidently, with some modifications, the organisation and development of rich materials often rather suggested than worked out in the Platonic dialogues.



Aristotle thus, in constructing a system of knowledge which was destined immensely to influence the thoughts of mankind, became, in the first place, the disciple of Plato and the intellectual heir of Socrates; and summed up all the best that had been arrived at by the previous philosophers of Greece.

The personal relationships which arose between Aristotle and his master Plato have furnished matter for uncertain traditions and for much discussion. There seems, however, to be no ground for sustaining the charge of "ingratitude" against Aristotle. The truth was probably somewhat as follows: Aristotle, while engaged in imbibing deeply the philosophical thoughts of Plato, gradually developed also his own individuality and independence of mind. And the natural bias of his intellect was certainly in a different direction from that of Plato. It has been said that "every man is born either a Platonist or an Aristotelian;" and it would be very fortunate if that were literally true, for then every man would be born with a noble type of intellect. But it is no doubt correct to say that the Platonic and the Aristotelian type of intellect are distinct and divergent. They have in common the keen and unwearied pressure after truth, but they seek the truth under different aspects. Plato was ever aspiring to intuitions of a truth which in this world could never be wholly revealed,—a truth of which glimpses only could be obtained, partly by the most abstract powers of thought, partly by the imagination. While richly endowed with humour and the dramatic faculty, and the most trenchant insight into the fallacies of mankind, Plato was not content with aiming at those demonstrations which could be stated once for all, but he rather sought analogies and hints of a truth which can never be definitely expressed. Eternity, the life of the gods, the supra-sensible world of "pure ideas," were of more reality and importance to him than the affairs of this life. While he was the greatest and most original of metaphysical philosophers, he never ceased to be a poet, and, to some extent, a mystic.

The intellectual characteristics of Aristotle, as known to us from his works, present a great contrast to all this. He was too much in earnest, and at the same time too matter-of-fact, to allow poetry and the imagination any share in the quest

for truth. He had no taste for half lights; and with regard to such great questions as the immortality of the soul, the nature of God, the operation of Providence, and the like, it is evident that so far from preferring these, he rather kept aloof from them, and only gave cautious and grudging utterances upon them. His passion was for definite knowledge, especially knowledge so methodised that it could be stated in the form of a general principle, or law. He thought that to obtain a general principle in which knowledge was summed up, on any subject, was of the utmost importance; that such a principle was a possession for all future time, that future generations would apply to it and work it out in detail, and thus that it would form the nucleus of a science. And this was the daring aim of Aristotle—no less than the foundation of all the sciences. There were, of course, imperfections in Aristotle's method in physical science when compared with that of modern times. But for all that, his spirit was essentially scientific, and for the sake of science and the naked truth he discarded all beauty and grace of style. Plato on the other hand was an artist, and clothed all his thoughts in beauty; and if there be (as there surely is) a truth which is above the truth of scientific knowledge, that was the truth after which Plato aspired. Aristotle's aspirations were for methodised experience and the definite.

It is easy to understand, or imagine, how two great minds with such divergent tendencies would be unable to continue for ever to stand to each other in the relation of pupil to teacher. For a time, no doubt, the divergence would not be discovered. Aristotle at first would appear only as "the mind" of Plato's school. And his first attempts at philosophical writing appear to have been made in the form of dialogues in somewhat feeble imitation of the masterpieces of Plato. He may have adhered for several years to this mode of composition. But all the while his powers, his knowledge, and his methods of thought were maturing, and he was working his way to the conception of a quite different mode of setting forth philosophy. Gradually, as he grasped, or thought he had grasped, all that Plato had to impart, his mind would tend to dwell more on those aspects of Plato's thought with which

he did not sympathise. He would especially feel a sort of impatience at the licence allowed to the imagination to intrude itself into the treatment of philosophic questions,—at the substitution of gorgeous myths and symbolical figures for plain exact answers of the understanding. This feeling of impatience broke out in a polemic against that doctrine of the eternal “Ideas” of Forms of Things, which appears somewhat variously set forth in Plato’s dialogues, especially in ‘*Timæus*,’ ‘*Phædrus*,’ and ‘*Republic*,’ and which doubtless formed a prominent topic in Plato’s discourses to his school. We are told by Proclus that Aristotle “proclaimed loudly in his dialogues that he was unable to sympathise with the doctrine of Ideas, even though his opposition to it should be attributed to a factious spirit.” The import of that doctrine was to disparage the world of sensible objects. It represented that when we, by means of our senses, apprehend, or think that we apprehend, particular objects, we are like men sitting in a dimly-lighted subterraneous cavern, and staring at shadows on the wall; that the world of sense is a world of shadows, but that a true world exists,—a world of Ideas; that nothing is really good or beautiful in the world of sense, but what we call good or beautiful things are those which have a faint semblance to the Idea of the good or the beautiful, and thus bring back to our souls the remembrance of those Ideas, which we once saw in our ante-natal condition; that the Ideas or Forms are archetypes, in accordance with which the Creator framed this world; that they are not only the cause of qualities and attributes in things, such as goodness, justice, equality, and the like, but also they are heads of classes or universals, and that they alone have complete reality, while the individuals, constituting the classes at the head of which they stand, only “participate” to a certain extent in real existence. Such were some of the features of Plato’s celebrated doctrine of Ideas. That he did not himself hold very strongly or dogmatically to its details, may be judged from the fact that in two of his dialogues (‘*Parmenides*’ and ‘*Sophist*’) he himself points out, and does not remove, many difficulties which attach to them. But the main gist of the doctrine was to assert what is called Realism; and this, under one form or another, Plato

always maintained. When Aristotle attacked the doctrine of Ideas, there was the first beginning of that controversy between the Realists and the Nominalists, which so much excited the minds of men in the middle ages. Realism, making reason independent of the senses, asserts that the universal is more real than the particular,—that, for instance, the universal idea of “man” in general is more real, and can be grasped by the mind with greater certainty, than the conception of any individual man. Nominalism, on the contrary, asserts the superior reality of individual objects, and turns the universal into a mere name. Now it was quite natural for Aristotle, with his tendency towards physical science and experiment, and the amassing of particular facts, to take the Nominalist view, so far as to assert the reality of individual objects. But there is reason for doubting that he ever became a thorough and consistent Nominalist. For the present it is sufficient to note that at the outset of his philosophical career he appears to have made an onslaught, in several dialogues which he wrote for the purpose, on Plato’s doctrine of Ideas. In three passages of his extant works he gives summaries of his arguments on the subject. He couches those arguments in courteous language, and in one place introduces them with words which have been Latinised into the well-known phrase—*Amicus Plato, sed magis amica Veritas*, which may be rendered, “Dear is Plato, but dearer Truth.” Yet the arguments themselves appear somewhat captious. And there may have been a youthful vehemence in the mode in which he first urged them. Here probably first appeared “the little rift within the lute;” this was the beginning of that divergence of mind and attitude which, growing wider, rendered it ultimately impossible that Aristotle should be chosen to succeed Plato, as inheritor of his method, and head of the Academic school.

In another set of circumstances, tradition affords us indications of the independence and self-confidence of Aristotle having been manifested during the lifetime of Plato. In his extant writings, Plato speaks so disparagingly of the art of Rhetoric, that we can hardly fancy his giving any encouragement to the study of it among his disciples. But none the less Aristotle appears to have diligently laboured in this, as in



every other intellectual province that he found open. Plato would not separate Rhetoric from the rhetorical spirit; he regarded the whole thing as a procedure for tickling the ears, for flattering crowds, for subordinating truth to effect. Aristotle, in the analytical way which became one of his chief characteristics, separated the method of Rhetoric from the uses to which it might be applied. He saw that success in Rhetoric depended on general principles and laws of the human mind, and that it would be worth while to draw these out and frame them into a science, especially as many of his countrymen had already essayed to do the same, though imperfectly. He maintained that the study of the methods of Rhetoric was desirable and even necessary to a free citizen, for self-defence, for the exposure of sophistry, and in the interests of truth itself. Now, the greatest school of Rhetoric in all Greece was at this period held in Athens by the renowned Isocrates, who, when Aristotle arrived at Athens, was at the zenith of his reputation. He professed to inculcate what he called "philosophy," but which was really a kind of thought standing half-way between pure speculative search for truth, like that of Plato, and the merely worldly and practical aims of the Sophists. There was small sympathy between the Academy and the school of Isocrates, the aims of the two being so very different. Plato and his followers looked down with more or less contempt on the half-philosophising of Isocrates. And at last the youthful Aristotle came forward as a champion, challenging and attacking the highly-reputed veteran. He seems to have assailed the matter of the discourses of Isocrates, as being of a superficial and merely oratorical character, and also his theory of the art of rhetoric, and his mode of teaching it. The strictures of Aristotle were answered by Cephisodorus, one of the pupils of Isocrates, who wrote a defence of his master in four books. Both attack and reply have completely perished. Aristotle appears to have followed up his theoretical denunciation of Isocrates by the practical step of opening a school of Rhetoric in rivalry to his. What the success of this enterprise may have been is not recorded. There is no reason for supposing that the young Stagirite at all succeeded in impressing the Athenians at that time with his su-



perior insight into the laws of Rhetoric. The real value and scientific pre-eminence of his views came out in the immortal treatise on Rhetoric, which many years later he composed.

Plato died in the year 347 B.C., and we find that in that year Aristotle, together with his fellow-disciple Xenocrates, left Athens, and went to reside at Atarneus, a town of Asia Minor, ruled over by Hermeias, an enlightened prince. He hospitably received the two emigrants from Plato's school, and entertained them at his court for three years, during which time he bestowed the hand of Pythias, his niece, upon Aristotle in marriage. This may be conceived to have been a happy period of Aristotle's life, but it was cut short by the death of his benefactor, who was treacherously kidnapped by a Greek officer in the service of the Persians, and put to death. Aristotle afterwards recorded his admiration for Hermeias, in a hymn or pæan which he wrote in his honour, and in which he likened him to Hercules and the Dioscuri, and other heroes of noble endurance.

On flying from Atarneus, as they were now obliged to do, Xenocrates returned to Athens, and Aristotle took up his abode with his wife at Mitylene, where he lived two or three years, until he was invited by Philip of Macedon to become the tutor of Alexander, then a boy of the age of thirteen. That Aristotle, the prince of philosophers and supreme master of the sphere of knowledge, should be called upon to train the mind of Alexander, the conqueror of the world, seems a combination so romantic, that it has come to be thought that it must have been the mere invention of some sophist or rhetorician. This, however, is an unnecessary scepticism, for antiquity is unanimous in accepting the tradition, and there are no circumstances that we know of which are inconsistent with it. Aristotle's family connection with the royal family of Macedon made it natural that now, when he had acquired a certain reputation in Greece, he should be offered this charge. Unfortunately no information has been handed down to us as to the way in which he performed its duties. History is silent on the subject, and we cannot even gather from any of Aristotle's own writings his views as to the education of a prince; the treatise on education, which was to have formed part of his 'Politics,' has reached us as an incomplete or mu-

tilated fragment. Nothing that is recorded of Alexander tends to throw any light on his early training, except, perhaps, his interest in Homer and in the Attic tragedians, and his power of addressing audiences in Greek, which was, of course, to a Macedonian an acquired language. It is reasonable to suppose that Aristotle instructed him in rhetoric, and imbued him with Greek literature, and took him through a course of mathematics. Whether he attempted anything beyond this "secondary instruction" we know not. But it would be vain to look for traces of a personal and intellectual influence having been produced by the teacher on the mind of his pupil. Alexander's was a genius of that first-rate order that grows independently of, or soon outgrows, all education. His mind was not framed to be greatly interested in science or philosophy; he was, as the First Napoleon said of himself, *tout à fait un être politique* [Through and through a political being]; and even during part of the period of Aristotle's tutelage, he was associated with his father in the business of the State. On the whole, we might almost imagine that Aristotle's functions at the court of Macedonia were light, and that he was allowed considerable leisure for the quiet prosecution of his own great undertakings. He seems, however, to have enjoyed the full confidence and favour of his patrons,<sup>1</sup> and to have retained his appointment altogether about five years, until Philip was assassinated in the year 336 B.C., and Alexander became King of Macedonia.

For a year after the death of Philip, Aristotle still remained, residing either at Pella or at Stageira; but of course no longer as preceptor to Alexander, whose mind was now totally absorbed by imperial business and plans for the subjugation of all the peoples of the East,—while his own mind was meditating plans different in kind, but no less vast, for the subjugation of all the various realms of knowledge. In 335

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle at this time obtained the permission of Philip to rebuild and resettle his native city, Stageira, which had been sacked and ruined in the Olynthian war (349-347 B.C.) He collected the citizens, who had been scattered abroad, invited new comers, and made laws for the community. In memory of these services an annual festival was afterwards held in his honour at Stageira.

B. C., the preparations for Alexander's oriental campaigns were commenced in earnest, and Aristotle then again betook himself, after a twelve years' absence, to Athens, whither he returned with all the prestige which could be derived from the most marked indications of the favour of Alexander, who ordered a statue of him to be set up at Athens, and who is said also to have furnished him with ample funds for the prosecution of physical and zoological investigations. Athenæus computes the total sum given to Aristotle in that way at 800 talents (nearly £200,000); and, if this had been the actual fact, it would have been, perhaps, the greatest instance on record of the "endowment of research." But we can only treat the statement as at best mere hearsay. We know how amounts of this kind are invariably exaggerated; and, indeed, the whole story may have arisen from the imagination of later Greek writers dwelling on the relationship between the philosopher and the king. The same may be said of Pliny's assertion, that "thousands of men" in Alexander's army were put at the orders of Aristotle for the purposes of scientific inquiry and collection. Had this been true, Aristotle, though far from being able to make the use which now would be made of such an opportunity, would have been in a position which many a biologist of the present day might envy. Even discounting all such statements as uncertain and questionable, we must still admit that Aristotle, in his 50th year, was enabled, under the most favourable auspices, to commence building up the great fabric of philosophy and science for which he had been, all his life long, making the plans and gathering the materials.

Aristotle, on his return, found Speusippus dead, and Xenocrates installed as leader of the Platonic school of Philosophy, which was held, as we have said, in the groves of Academe, on the west of the city of Athens. He immediately opened a rival school on the eastern side in the grounds attached to the Temple of the Lyceian Apollo. From his using the covered walks (*peripatoi*) in these grounds for lecturing to, and intercourse with, his pupils, the name of "Peripatetics" came to be given to his scholars, and to the Aristotelian sect in general. His chief object was research; he sought to construct an encyclopædia, in which each science should appear brand-

new, originally created or quite reconstructed by himself. He began from the very beginning, and framed his own philosophical or scientific nomenclature; he traced out the laws on which human reasoning proceeds, and was the first to reduce these to science, and to produce a Logic. He wrote anew 'Metaphysics,' 'Ethics,' 'Politics,' 'Rhetoric,' and 'The Art of Poetry;' and while these were still on the stocks, he was engaged in founding, on the largest scale, the physical and natural sciences, especially natural philosophy, physiology under various aspects (such as histology and anatomy, embryology, psychology, the philosophy of the senses, &c.), and, above all, natural history. Much of this work, especially its more abstract part, was the slowly-ripened fruit of his entire previous life. But though he had great stores ready that only required to be arranged and put forth, he never ceased pushing out inquiries in all directions, and collecting fresh materials. He had quite the Baconian zeal for *experientia tabulata*, for lists and memoranda of all kinds of facts, historical, political, psychological, or naturalistic. He loved to note problems to be solved and difficulties to be answered. Thus a boundless field of subordinate labour was opened, in which his pupils might be employed. The absence of any effort after artistic beauty in his writings made it easier to incorporate here and there the contributions of his apprentices. And his works, as we have them, exhibit some traces of co-operative work. The Peripatetic school, after his death, followed the direction which Aristotle had given them, and were noted for their monographs on small particular points.

But few traditions bearing upon this part of his life have been handed down. These chiefly point to his relations with Alexander, with whom, as well as with Antipater, who was acting as viceroy in Macedonia, he is represented as having maintained a friendly correspondence. Cassander, the son of Antipater, appears to have attended his school. As time went on, the character of Alexander became corrupted by unchecked success, Asiatic influences, and the all but universal servility which he encountered. His mind became alienated from those Greek citizens around him who showed any independence of spirit. He quarrelled with Antipater, who was faithfully act-



ing for him at home. On a frivolous charge he cruelly put to death Callisthenes, a young orator whom, on the recommendation of Aristotle, he had taken in his retinue. On this and other occasions he is said to have broken out into bitter expressions against "the sophistries" of Aristotle,—that is to say, his free and reasonable political principles. The East, conquered physically by Alexander, had conquered and changed the mind of its conqueror. And he had now fallen quite out of sympathy with his ancient preceptor and friend. But the Athenians seem to have been unconscious of any such change. Aristotle had come to Athens as the avowed favourite and *protégé* of Alexander, and that, too, at a moment when Alexander (335 B.C.), by sacking the city of Thebes, and by compelling Athens with the threat of a similar fate to exile some of her anti-Macedonian statesmen, had made himself the object of sullen dread and covert dislike to the majority of the Athenian citizens. Some portion of this feeling was doubtless reflected upon Aristotle, but during the life of Alexander any manifestation of it was checked, the affairs of Athens being administered for the time by the "Macedonian" party. Of this party Aristotle was naturally regarded as a pronounced adherent, and he came even to be identified with those arbitrary and tyrannical acts of Alexander, which must in reality have been most repugnant to him. This was especially the case in 324 B.C., when Alexander thought fit to insult the Hellenic cities, by sending a proclamation to be read by a herald at the Olympic Games, ordering them to recall all citizens who were under sentence of banishment, and threatening with instant invasion any city which should hesitate to obey this command. The officer charged with bearing this offensive proclamation, so galling to the self-respect of the Grecian communities, turned out to be none other than Nicanor of Stageira, son of Proxenus the guardian of Aristotle, and now the ward and destined son-in-law of Aristotle himself. This unfortunate circumstance could not fail to draw upon the philosopher, without any fault of his own, the animosity of the Athenian people. In the summer of the next year (323 B.C.), the eyes of all Greece were still anxiously fixed upon the movements of Alexander, when of a sudden the startling news thrilled through

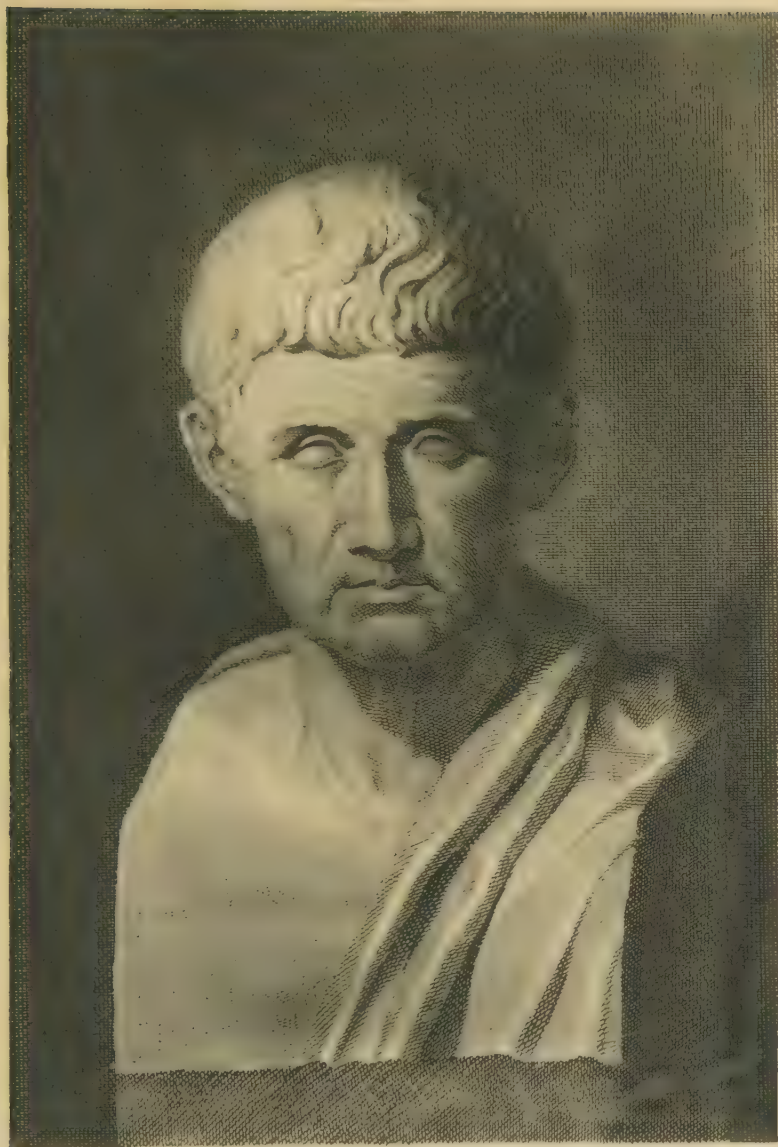


every city that the life of the great conqueror had been cut short by a violent fever at Babylon.

By the death of Alexander the position of Aristotle at Athens was profoundly affected. The anti-Macedonian party at once, for the moment, regained power; the statesmen who had hitherto protected him were forced to fly from the city, and the spirit of reaction included him also in its attacks. It now became clear that Aristotle had a host of enemies in Athens. There were three classes of persons from whom especially these hostile ranks would naturally be recruited: 1st, The numerous friends of the orator Isocrates, with whom Aristotle in earlier life had put himself in competition; 2d, The Platonists, who resented Aristotle's divergence from their master and his polemic against certain points of the Platonic system; 3d, The anti-Macedonian party, who indiscriminately visited on Aristotle the political acts of Alexander. Feelings that had been long repressed and kept concealed, while Aristotle was strong in political support, were now licensed by the changed circumstances to come forth into act. His enemies seized on the moment to do him a mischief. An indictment, charging him with "impiety," was drawn up by Eurymedon, the chief priest of the Eleusinian Ceres, aided by a son of Ephorus, the historian, who had been one of the pupils of Isocrates. Matter for this accusation was obtained partly from Aristotle's poem written in honour of Hermeias, and which equalled him to the demi-gods, partly from the fact that Aristotle had placed a statue of Hermeias in the temple at Delphi, partly also from some passages in his published writings which were pointed to as inconsistent with the national religion. A philosopher's view must necessarily differ from the popular view of the topics of religion. Yet in his extant works Aristotle is always tender and reverent in dealing with popular beliefs; indeed, in modern times, these works have been regarded as a bulwark of ecclesiastical feeling. The whole charge, if taken on its real merits, must be considered utterly frivolous; yet those who would have to try the case—a large jury taken from the general mass of the citizens—could not be depended on for discrimination in such a question. They would be too subject to the currents of envy, political, personal,

and anti-philosophical, setting in from various quarters; they would be too readily imbued with the *odium theologicum*. Nothing but a very general popularity would have been an effectual protection at such a moment, and this is not likely that Aristotle ever possessed in Athens. While capable of devoted and generous friendship, he may easily have been cold and reserved towards general society. He was absorbed in study, and probably lived confined within the narrow scientific circle of his own school. He may even have exhibited some of those proud characteristics which he attributes in his 'Ethics' to the "great-souled" man, "who claims great things for himself because he is worthy of them," and "who cannot bear to associate with any one except a friend." However this may have been, he was probably right on the present occasion to decline submitting his life and opinions to the judgment of the populace of Athens. He availed himself of the law which gave to any accused person the option of quitting the city before the day of trial, and he retired to Chalcis in Eubœa, "in order," as he is reported to have said, "that the Athenians might not have another opportunity of sinning against philosophy, as they had already done once in the person of Socrates."

Chalcis was the original home of the ancestry of Aristotle, and he appears to have had some property there; but it was especially a safe place of refuge for him, as being occupied at this time by a Macedonian garrison. He probably intended only to make a short sojourn there, till circumstances should be changed. He must have fully foreseen that in a short space of time the Macedonian arms would prevail, and restore at Athens the government which had hitherto protected him. He left his school and library in charge of Theophrastus, doubtless looking forward to a speedy return to them and to the resumption of those labours which had already consummated so much. And all this would have happened but that, within a year's time, in 322 B.C., he was seized with illness, and died somewhat suddenly at Chalcis, in the sixty-third year of his age. The story that he had taken poison may be dismissed as fabulous. A more trustworthy account speaks of his having suffered from impaired digestion, the natural result of his habits of application, and this may very likely have been the cause of his death.





# THE ART OF POETRY

## PART I

### GENERAL AND COMPARATIVE VIEW OF POETRY AND ITS PRINCIPAL SPECIES

#### INTRODUCTION

My design is to treat of POETRY in general, and of its several species—to inquire, what is the proper *effect* of each—what construction of a *fable*, or *plan*, is essential to a good Poem—of *what*, and *how many*, *parts*, each species consists; with whatever else belongs to the same subject: which I shall consider in the order that most naturally presents itself.

#### I

##### POETRY A SPECIES OF IMITATION

Epic Poetry, Tragedy, Comedy, Dithyrambics, as also, for the most part, the Music of the flute, and of the lyre—all these are, in the most general view of them, IMITATIONS; differing, however, from each other in *three* respects, according to the different *means*, the different *objects*, or the different *manner*, of their imitation.

#### II

##### DIFFERENT MEANS OF IMITATION

For, as men, some through art, and some through habit, imitate various objects, by means of *colour* and *figure*, and others, again, by *voice*; so, with respect to the arts above-mentioned, *rhythm*, *words*, and *melody*, are the different *means* by which, either single, or variously combined, they all produce their imitation.

For example: in the imitations of the flute, and the lyre, and of any other instruments capable of producing a similar effect—as the *syrinx*, or pipe—*melody* and *rhythm* only are



employed. In those of Dance, *rhythm* alone, without melody; for there are dancers who, by rhythm applied to gesture, express manners, passions, and actions.

The ΕΡΟΠΟΕΙΑ imitates by *words alone*, or by *verse*; and that verse may either be composed of various metres, or confined, according to the practice hitherto established, to a single species. For we should, otherwise, have no *general* name which would comprehend the Mimes of SOPHRON and XENARCHUS, and the *Socratic* dialogues; or Poems in Iambic, Elegiac, or other metres, in which the *Epic* species of imitation may be conveyed. Custom, indeed, connecting the *poetry* or *making* with the *metre*, has denominated some *Elegiac Poets*, i.e. *makers*<sup>1</sup> of *elegiac verse*; others, *Epic Poets*; i.e. *makers* of *hexameter verse*; thus distinguishing Poets, not according to the nature of their *imitation*, but according to that of their *metre* only. For even they, who compose treatises of medicine, or natural philosophy, in verse, are denominated *Poets*: yet HOMER and EMPEDOCLES have nothing in common, except their *metre*; the former, therefore, justly merits the name of *Poet*; while the other should rather be called a *Physiologist* than a *Poet*.

So, also, though any one should chuse to convey his imitation in every kind of metre, promiscuously, as CHÆREMON has done in his *Centaur*, which is a medley of all sorts of verse, it would not immediately follow, that, on *that* account merely, he was entitled to the name of *Poet*.—But of this, enough.—

There are, again, other species of Poetry which make use of *all* the *means* of imitation, *rhythm*, *melody*, and *verse*. Such are, the *Dithyrambic*, that of *Nomes*, *Tragedy*, and *Comedy*: with this difference, however, that in some of these,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It may be necessary to observe, that the Greek word (*poiētēs*), whence *poeta*, and *poet*, is, literally, *maker*; and maker, it is well known, was once the current term for *poet* in our language.

<sup>2</sup> In Dithyrambic, or *Bacchic* hymns, and in the *Nomes*, which were also a species of hymns, to Apollo, and other deities, *all* the means of imitation were employed *together*, and *throughout*: in *Tragedy* and *Comedy*, *separately*; some of them in one part of the drama, and some in another. (See Part II. Chapter I.) In the *choral*

they are employed *all together*, in others, *separately*. And such are the differences of these arts with respect to the *means* by which they imitate.

### III

#### DIFFERENT OBJECTS OF IMITATION

But, as the *objects* of imitation are the actions of *men*, and these men must of necessity be either good or bad, (for on this does *character* principally depend; the *manners* being, in *all* men, most strongly marked by virtue and vice,) it follows, that we can only represent men, either as *better* than they actually are, or *worse*, or exactly *as they are*; just as, in *Painting*, the pictures of *Polygnotus* were above the common level of nature; those of *Pauson*, below it; those of *Dionysius*, faithful *likenesses*.

Now it is evident that each of the imitations above-mentioned will admit of these differences, and become a different kind of imitation, as it imitates *objects* that differ in this respect. This may be the case with *Dancing*; with the *Music* of the flute, and of the lyre; and, also, with the *Poetry* which employs *words*, or *verse* only, without *melody*, or *rhythm*: thus, *Homer* has drawn men *superior* to what they are; *Cleophon*, *as they are*; *Hegemon* the Thasian, the inventor of parodies, and *Nicochares*, the author of the *Deliad*, *worse* than they are.

So, again, with respect to *Dithyrambics*, and *Nomes*: in these, too, the imitation may be as different as that of the Persians, by *Timotheus*, and the Cyclops, by *Philo Xenus*.

*Tragedy*, also, and *Comedy*, are distinguished in the same manner; the aim of *Comedy* being, to exhibit men *worse* than we find them, that of *Tragedy*, *better*.

### IV

#### DIFFERENT MANNER OF IMITATION

There remains the *third* difference—that of the *manner* in which each of these objects may be imitated. For the

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part, however, at least, if no where else, *all*, melody, rhythm and words, must probably have been used *at once*, as in the hymns.

Poet, imitating the *same object*, and by the *same means*, may do it either in NARRATION—and that, again, either personating other characters, as HOMER does, or, in his own person throughout, without change:—or, he may imitate by representing all his characters as real, and employed in the very ACTION itself.

These, then, are the three differences by which, as I said in the beginning, all imitation is distinguished; those of the *means*, the *object*, and the *manner*: so that *Sophocles* is, in one respect, an imitator of the same kind with *Homer*, as elevated characters are the *objects* of both; in another respect, of the same kind with *Aristophanes*, as both imitate in the *way* of action; whence, according to some, the application of the term *Drama* [i. e. *action*] to such Poems. Upon this it is that the *Dorians* ground their claim to the invention both of Tragedy and Comedy. For Comedy is claimed by the Megarians,<sup>1</sup> both by those of Greece, who contend that it took its rise in their popular government; and by those of Sicily, among whom the poet *Epicharmus* flourished long before *Chionides* and *Magne's*: and Tragedy, also, is claimed by some of the Dorians of Peloponnesus.—In support of these claims they argue from the *words* themselves. They allege, that the Doric word for a *village* is CÔMÊ, the Attic, DEMOS; and that *Comedians* were so called, not from COMAZEIN—to *revel*—but from their strolling about the COMAI, or *villages*, before they were tolerated in the city. They say, farther, that, *to do*, or *act*, they express by the word DRAN; the Athenians by PRATTEIN.

And thus much as to the *differences* of imitation—how *many*, and *what*, they are.

## V

### ORIGIN OF POETRY

POETRY, in general, seems to have derived its origin from two *causes*, each of them *natural*.

I. TO IMITATE is instinctive in man from his infancy. By this he is distinguished from other animals, that he is, of

<sup>1</sup> Who were all of *Doric* origin.

all, the most imitative, and through this instinct receives his earliest education. All men, likewise, naturally receive pleasure from imitation. This is evident from what we experience in viewing the works of imitative art; for in them, we contemplate with pleasure, and with the *more* pleasure, the more exactly they are imitated, such objects as, if real, we could not see without pain; as, the figures of the meanest and most disgusting animals, dead bodies, and the like. And the reason of this is, that to *learn*, is a natural pleasure, not confined to philosophers, but common to all men; with this difference only, that the multitude partake of it in a more transient and compendious manner. Hence the pleasure they receive from a picture: in viewing it they *learn*, they *infer*, they *discover*, what every object is: that *this*, for instance, is such a particular man, &c. For if we suppose the object represented to be something which the spectator had never seen, his pleasure, in that case, will not arise from the *imitation*, but from the workmanship, the colours, or some such cause.

Imitation, then, being thus natural to us, and, *2ndly*, MELODY and RHYTHM being also natural, (for as to *metre*, it is plainly a *species* of rhythm,) those persons, in whom, originally, these propensities were the strongest, were naturally led to rude and extemporaneous attempts, which, gradually improved, gave birth to POETRY.

## VI

### ITS DIVISION INTO TWO KINDS—THE SERIOUS AND THE LUDICROUS

But this Poetry, following the different *characters* of its authors, naturally divided itself into *two* different *kinds*. They who were of a grave and lofty spirit, chose, for their imitation, the actions and the adventures of *elevated* characters: while Poets of a *lighter* turn, represented those of the *vicious* and *contemptible*. And these composed, originally, *Satires*; as the former did *Hymns* and *Encomia*.

Of the *lighter* kind, we have no Poem anterior to the time of HOMER, though many such, in all probability, there were; but, *from* his time, we have; as, his *Margites*, and

others of the same species, in which the Iambic was introduced as the most proper measure; and hence, indeed, the name of *Iambic*, because it was the measure in which they used to IAMBIZE, [i.e. to *satirize*,] each other.

And thus these old Poets were divided into two classes—those who used the *heroic* [*hexameter*] and those who used the *iambic*, verse.

And as, in the *serious* kind, HOMER alone may be said to deserve the name of Poet, not only on account of his other excellences, but also of the *dramatic*<sup>1</sup> spirit of his imitations; so was he likewise the first who suggested the idea of *Comedy*, by substituting *ridicule* for *invective*, and giving that ridicule a dramatic cast: for his MARGITES bears the same analogy to Comedy, as his ILIAD and ODYSSEY to Tragedy.—But when Tragedy and Comedy, had once made their appearance, succeeding Poets, according to the turn of their genius, attached themselves to the one, or the other, of these new species: the lighter sort, instead of *Iambic*, became *Comic* Poets; the graver, *Tragic*, instead of *Heroic*: and that, on account of the superior dignity and higher estimation of these latter *forms* of Poetry.

Whether Tragedy has now, with respect to its constituent parts,<sup>2</sup> received the utmost improvement of which it is capable, considered both in *itself*, and relatively to the *theatre*, is a question that belongs not to this place.

## VII

### PROGRESS OF TRAGEDY

Both Tragedy, then, and Comedy, having originated in a rude and unpremeditated manner—the first from the *Dithyrambic* hymns, the other from those *Phallic* songs, which, in many cities, remain still in use—each advanced gradually towards perfection, by such successive improvements as were most obvious.

TRAGEDY, after various changes, reposed at length in the

<sup>1</sup> See Part III. Chapter III.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. the fable, the manners, the sentiments, &c.—See Part II. Chapter II.



completion of its proper form. ÆSCHYLUS first added a second actor;<sup>1</sup> he also abridged the CHORUS, and made the dialogue the principal part of Tragedy. SOPHOCLES increased the number of actors to three, and added the decoration of painted scenery. It was also late before Tragedy threw aside the short and simple *fable*, and ludicrous *language*, of its satyric original, and attained its proper magnitude and *dignity*. The *iambic* measure was then first adopted: for, originally, the *Trochaic* tetrameter was made use of, as better suited to the satyric<sup>2</sup> and saltatorial genius of the Poem at that time; but when the dialogue was formed, nature itself pointed out the proper metre. For the *iambic* is, of all metres, the most colloquial; as appears evidently from this fact, that our common conversation frequently falls into *iambic* verse; seldom into *hexameter*, and only when we depart from the usual *melody* of speech.—*Episodes* were, also, multiplied, and every other part of the drama successively improved and polished.

But of this enough: to enter into a minute detail would, perhaps, be a task of some length.

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<sup>1</sup> The first who introduced a single actor, or speaker, between those choral songs which originally, we are told, formed the whole of *Tragedy*, i.e. according to the most usual derivation of the word, *the goat-singing*, was THESPIUS, whom Aristotle passes over in silence. By introducing a *second* actor, Æschylus, in fact, introduced the *dialogue*; though it seems probable that the *single* speaker of Thespis told his tale, in part, at least, *dramatically*.

<sup>2</sup> *Satyric*, from the share which those fantastic beings called *Satyrs*, the companions and *play-fellows* of *Bacchus*, had in the earliest Tragedy, of which they formed the chorus. *Joking*, and *dancing*, were essential attributes of these rustic semi-deities. Hence, the "*ludicrous language*," and the "*dancing genius*" of the old Tragedy, to which the TROCHAIC or *running* metre here spoken of was peculiarly adapted; being no other than this:

"Jolly mortals, fill your glasses, noble deeds are done by wine."

The reader will not confound *satyric* with *satiric*; nor the Greek *satyric* drama, with the *satire* of Roman origin. The two words are of different derivations [*satire* being derived from *satura*, a dish of mixed fruits.—*M. M. M.*].

## VIII

## OBJECT AND PROGRESS OF COMEDY

COMEDY, as was said before, is an imitation of *bad characters*; bad, not with respect to every sort of vice, but to the RIDICULOUS only, as being a *species* of turpitude or deformity; since it may be defined to be—a *fault* or *deformity* of such a sort as is neither *painful* nor *destructive*. A ridiculous face, for example, is something ugly and distorted, but not so as to cause *pain*.

The successive improvements of Tragedy, and the respective authors of them, have not escaped our knowledge; but those of Comedy, from the little attention that was paid to it in its origin, remain in obscurity. For it was not till late, that Comedy was authorized by the magistrate, and carried on at the public expence: it was, at first, a private and voluntary exhibition. From the time, indeed, when it began to acquire some degree of form, its *Poets* have been recorded; but who first introduced masks, or prologues, or augmented the number of actors—these, and other particulars of the same kind, are unknown.

*Epicharmus* and *Phormis* were the first who *invented* comic fables. This improvement, therefore, is of Sicilian origin. But, of *Athenian* Poets, *Crates* was the first who abandoned the *Iambic*<sup>1</sup> form of comedy, and made use of *invented* and *general* stories, or fables.

## IX

## EPIC AND TRAGIC SPECIES COMPARED

*Epic* Poetry agrees so far with *Tragic*, as it is an imitation of *great characters* and *actions*, by *means* of *words*: but in this it differs, that it makes use of only one kind of metre throughout; and that it is *narrative*. It also differs in *length*: for Tragedy endeavours, as far as possible, to confine

<sup>1</sup> *Iambic*, i.e. *satirical*, and *personally* so, like the old *Iambi*, *invectives*, or lampoons, of which Aristotle speaks above, Chapter VI, and from which the *Iambic metre*, which is not here alluded to, took its name.

its action within the limits of a single revolution of the sun, or nearly so; but the time of Epic action is indefinite. This, however, at first, was equally the case with Tragedy itself.

Of their constituent *parts*, some are common to both, some peculiar to Tragedy. He, therefore, who is a judge of the beauties and defects of Tragedy, is, of course, equally a judge with respect to those of Epic Poetry: for all the parts of the Epic poem are to be found in Tragedy; *not* all those of Tragedy, in the Epic poem.

## PART II OF TRAGEDY

### I

#### DEFINITION OF TRAGEDY

OF the species of Poetry which imitates in *hexameters*, and of *Comedy*, we shall speak hereafter. Let us now consider TRAGEDY; collecting, first, from what has been already said, its true and essential definition.

Tragedy, then, is an imitation of some *action* that is *important*, *entire*, and of a proper *magnitude*—by *language*, embellished and rendered *pleasurable*, but by different *means* in different parts—in the *way*, not of *narration*, but of *action*—effecting through *pity* and *terror*, the *correction* and *refinement* of such passions.

By *pleasurable language*, I mean a language that has the embellishments of rhythm, melody, and metre. And I add, *by different means in different parts*, because in some parts metre alone is employed, in others, melody.

### II.

#### DEDUCTION OF ITS CONSTITUENT PARTS

Now as Tragedy imitates by *acting*, the DECORATION,<sup>1</sup> in the

<sup>1</sup> *Decoration*—literally, the decoration of the *spectacle*, or *sight*. In other places it is called the *spectacle*, or *sight* only, *opsis*. It comprehends *scenery*, *dresses*—the whole visible apparatus of the theatre.

first place, must necessarily be *one* of its parts: then the MELOPŒIA, (or MUSIC<sup>1</sup>,) and the DICTION; for these last include the *means* of tragic imitation. By *diction*, I mean the metrical composition.<sup>2</sup> The meaning of *Melopaia* is obvious to every one.

Again—Tragedy being an imitation of an action, and the persons employed in that action being necessarily characterized by their *manners* and their *sentiments*, since it is from *these* that actions themselves derive their character, it follows, that there must also be, MANNERS, and SENTIMENTS, as the two *causes* of actions, and, consequently, of the happiness, or unhappiness, of all men. The *imitation of the action* is the FABLE: for by *fable* I now mean the *contexture of incidents* or the *plot*. By *manners*, I mean, whatever marks the *characters* of the persons. By *sentiments*, whatever they *say*, whether *proving* any thing, or delivering a *general sentiment*, &c.<sup>3</sup>

Hence, all Tragedy must necessarily contain *six* parts, which, together, constitute its peculiar character, or *quality*: FABLE, MANNERS, DICTION, SENTIMENTS, DECORATION, and MUSIC. Of these parts, two relate to the *means*, one to the *manner*, and three to the *object*, of imitation.<sup>4</sup> And these are all. These *specific parts*, if we may so call them, have been employed by most Poets, and are all to be found in almost every Tragedy.

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I do not know any single English word, that answers fully to the Greek word.

<sup>1</sup> *Melopaia*—literally, the *making*, or the *composition*, of the *Music*; as we use *Epopaia*, or according to the French termination, which we have naturalized, *Epopée*, to signify *epic poetry*, or *epic-making*, in general.

<sup>2</sup> Not the *versification*, but merely the metrical *expression*—the *language* of the verse. This is plain from the clearer definition in the following chapter.

<sup>3</sup> For a fuller account of *this* part of Tragedy, see Chapter XXII.

<sup>4</sup> *Music*, and *diction*, to the *means*, which are *words*, *melody*, and *rhythm*: *decoration*, to the *manner* of imitating—i.e. by *representation* and *action*: *fable*, *manners*, and *sentiments*, to the *objects* of imitation—i.e. *men*, and their actions, characters, &c.

## III.

## COMPARATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE PARTS

But of all these parts the most important is the *combination* of incidents, or, the FABLE. Because Tragedy is an imitation, not of *men*, but of *actions*—of life, of happiness and unhappiness: for happiness consists in action, and the supreme good itself, the very *end* of life, is *action* of a certain kind'—not *quality*. Now the *manners* of men constitute only their *quality* or *characters*; but it is by their *actions* that they are *happy*, or the contrary. Tragedy, therefore, does not imitate action, *for the sake* of imitating manners, but in the imitation of action, that of manners is of course involved. So that the *action* and the *fable* are the *end* of Tragedy; and in every thing the *end* is of principal importance.

Again—Tragedy cannot subsist without *action*; without *manners* it may; the Tragedies of most modern Poets have this defect; a defect common, indeed, among Poets in general. As among Painters also, this is the case with ZEUXIS, compared with POLYGNOTUS: the latter excels in the expression of the *manners*; there is no such expression in the pictures of ZEUXIS.

Farther—suppose any one to string together a number of speeches in which the manners are strongly marked, the language and the sentiments well turned; this will not be sufficient to produce the proper effect of Tragedy: that end will much rather be answered by a piece, defective in each of those particulars, but furnished with a proper fable and contexture of incidents. Just as in painting, the most brilliant colours, spread at random and without design, will give far less pleasure than the simplest outline of a *figure*.

Add to this, that those parts of Tragedy, by means of which it becomes most interesting and affecting, are parts of the *fable*; I mean, *revolutions*, and *discoveries*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> i.e. *virtuous* action.—The doctrine of Aristotle was, that the *greatest happiness*, the *summum bonum* or *end* of life, consisted in *virtuous energies* and *actions*; not in virtue, considered merely as an *internal habit*, disposition, or *quality*, of mind.

<sup>2</sup> These are explained afterwards, Chapter IX.



As a farther proof, adventures in Tragic writing are sooner able to arrive at excellence in the language, and the manners, than in the construction of a plot; as appears from almost all our earlier Poets.

The fable, then, is the principal part, the *soul*, as it were, of Tragedy; and the MANNERS are next in rank: Tragedy being an imitation of an *action*, and *through that*, principally, of the *agents*.

In the *third* place stand the SENTIMENTS. To this part it belongs, to *say* such things as are *true* and *proper*; which, in the dialogue, depends on the *Political*<sup>1</sup> and *Rhetorical* arts: for, the antients made their characters speak in the style of political and popular eloquence; but now, the rhetorical manner prevails.

The *manners* are, whatever manifests the *disposition* of the speaker. There are speeches, therefore, which are without manners, or character; as not containing any thing by which the *propensities* or *aversions* of the person who delivers them can be known. The *sentiments* comprehend *whatever is said*; whether *proving* any thing, affirmatively, or negatively, or expressing some *general reflection*, &c.

*Fourth*, in order, is the DICTION; that is, as I have already said, the *expression* of the sentiments *by words*; the power and effect of which is the same, whether in verse or prose.

Of the remaining two parts, the MUSIC stands next; of all the pleasurable accompaniments and embellishments of Tragedy, the most delightful.

The DECORATION has, also, a great effect, but, of all the parts, is most foreign to the art. For the power of Tragedy is felt without representation, and actors; and the beauty of the decorations depends more on the art of the mechanic, than on that of the Poet.

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<sup>1</sup> The reader, here, must not think of our modern *politics*.—The *political*, or *civil art*, or *science*, was, in Aristotle's view, of wide extent, and high importance. It comprehended *ethics* and *eloquence*, or the art of public speaking; every thing, in short, that concerned the well-being of a *state*.

## IV

## OF THE FABLE

These things being thus adjusted, let us go on to examine in what manner the FABLE should be constructed; since this is the first, and most important part of Tragedy.

Now we have defined Tragedy to be an imitation of an action that is complete and *entire*; and that has also a certain *magnitude*; for a thing may be *entire*, and a *whole*, and yet not be of any *magnitude* [bigness].

1. By *entire*, I mean that which has a *beginning*, a *middle*, and an *end*. A *beginning*, is that which does not, necessarily, suppose any thing before it, but which requires something to follow it. An *end*, on the contrary, is that which supposes something to precede it, either necessarily, or probably; but which nothing is required to follow. A *middle*, is that which both supposes something to precede, and requires something to follow. The Poet, therefore, who would construct his fable properly, is not at liberty to begin, or end, where he pleases, but must conform to these definitions.

2. Again; whatever is beautiful, whether it be an animal or any other thing composed of different parts, must not only have those parts arranged in a certain manner, but must also be of a certain *magnitude*; for beauty consists in *magnitude* and *order*. Hence it is that no very minute animal can be beautiful; the eye comprehends the whole too instantaneously to distinguish and compare the parts:—neither, on the contrary, can one of a prodigious size be beautiful; because, as all its parts cannot be seen at once, the *whole*, the *unity* of object, is lost to the spectator; as it would be, for example, if he were surveying an animal of many miles in length. As, therefore, in animals, and other objects, a certain *magnitude* is requisite, but that magnitude must be such as to present a whole *easily comprehended by the eye*; so, in the fable, a certain *length* is requisite, but that length must be such as to present a whole *easily comprehended by the memory*.

With respect to the *measure* of this length—if referred to actual representation in the dramatic contests, it is a matter foreign to the art itself: for if a hundred Tragedies were to

be exhibited in concurrence, the length of each performance must be regulated by the hour-glass; a practice of which, it is said, there have formerly been instances. But, if we determine this measure by the nature of the thing itself, the more extensive the fable, consistently with the clear and easy comprehension of the whole, the more beautiful will it be, with respect to *magnitude*. In general, we may say, that an action is sufficiently extended, when it is long enough to admit of a change of fortune, from happy to unhappy, or the reverse, brought about by a succession, necessary or probable, of *well-connected* incidents.

## V

## UNITY OF THE FABLE

A *fable* is not *one*, as some conceive it to be, merely because the *hero* of it is *one*. For numberless events happen to one man, many of which are such as cannot be connected into *one event*: and so, likewise, there are many actions of one man which cannot be connected into any *one action*. Hence appears the mistake of all those Poets who have composed *HERCULEIDS*, *THESEIDS*, and other Poems of that kind. They conclude that because *Hercules* was one, so also must be the fable of which he is the subject. But *HOMER*, among his many other excellences, seems also to have been perfectly aware of this mistake, either from art or genius. For when he composed his *ODYSSEY*, he did not introduce all the events of his hero's life,—such, for instance, as the wound he received upon Parnassus—his feigned madness<sup>1</sup> when the Grecian army was assembling, &c.—events, not connected, either by necessary or probable *consequence*, with each other; but he comprehended those only which have relation to *one action*; for such we call that of the *Odyssey*.—And in the same manner he composed his *Iliad*.

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<sup>1</sup> To avoid going to the Trojan war, Ulysses pretended to be mad; and, to prove his insanity, went to plough with an ox and a horse; but Palamedes, in order to detect him, laid his infant son, Telemachus, in the way of the plough; upon which Ulysses immediately stopped, and thereby proved himself to be in his right senses.

As, therefore, in other mimetic arts, *one* imitation is an imitation of *one thing*, so here, the fable, being an imitation of an action, should be an imitation of an action that is *one*, and *entire*; the parts of it being so connected, that if any one of them be either transposed or taken away, the *whole* will be destroyed, or changed: for whatever may be *either* retained, or omitted, without making any sensible difference, is not, properly, a *part*.

## VI

## DIFFERENT PROVINCES OF THE POET AND THE HISTORIAN

It appears, farther, from what has been said, that it is not the Poet's province to relate such things as have actually happened, but such as *might* have happened—such as are *possible*, according either to probable, or necessary, consequence.

For it is not by writing in *verse*, or *prose*, that the Historian and the Poet are distinguished: the work of *Herodotus* might be versified; but it would still be a species of history, no less with metre, than without. They are distinguished by this, that the one relates what *has* been, the other what *might* be. On this account, Poetry is a more philosophical, and a more excellent thing, than History: for Poetry is chiefly conversant about *general* truth; History about *particular*. In what manner, for example, any person of a certain character would speak, or act, probably, or necessarily—this is *general*; and this is the object of Poetry, even while it makes use of particular *names*. But, what *Alcibiades* did, or what happened to him—this is *particular* truth.

With respect to Comedy, this is now become obvious; for here, the Poet, when he has formed his plot of *probable* incidents, gives to his characters whatever names he pleases; and is not, like the Iambic Poets, particular, and personal.

Tragedy, indeed, retains the use of real names; and the reason is, that, what we are disposed to believe, we must think *possible*: now what has never actually happened, we are not apt to regard as possible; but what *has* been is unquestionably so, or it could not have been at all. There are, however, some Tragedies in which one or two of the names

are historical, and the rest feigned: there are even some, in which none of the names are historical; such is AGATHO'S Tragedy called *The Flower*; for in that, all is invention, both incidents, and names; and yet it pleases. It is by no means, therefore, essential, that a Poet should confine himself to the known and established subjects of Tragedy. Such a restraint would, indeed, be ridiculous; since even those subjects that are known, are known, comparatively, but to few, and yet are interesting to all.

From all this it is manifest; that a Poet should be a Poet, or *maker*, of *fables*, rather than of *verses*; since it is *imitation* that constitutes the Poet, and of this imitation, *actions* are the object: nor is he the less a Poet, though the incidents of his fable should chance to be such as have actually happened; for nothing hinders, but that some *true* events may possess that *probability*, the invention of which entitles him to the name of *Poet*.

## VII

### EPISODIC FABLES, THE WORST—AND WHY

Of *simple* fables or actions, the *episodic* are the worst. I call that an episodic fable, the *episodes* of which follow each other without any *probable* or *necessary* connection; a fault into which bad Poets are betrayed by their want of skill, and good Poets by the players: for in order to accommodate their pieces to the purposes of rival performers in the dramatic contests, they spin out the action beyond their powers, and are thus, frequently, forced to break the connection and continuity of its parts.

But Tragedy is an imitation, not only of a *complete* action, but also of an action exciting *terror* and *pity*. Now that purpose is best answered by such events as are not only *unexpected*, but unexpected *consequences of each other*: for, by this means, they will have more of the *wonderful*, than if they appeared to be the effects of chance; since we find, that, among events merely casual, those are the most wonderful and striking, which *seem* to imply design: as when, for instance, the statue of *Mitys* at Argos killed the very man who had murdered *Mitys*, by falling down upon him as he was *sur-*



veying it; events of this kind, not having the appearance of *accident*. It follows then, that such fables as are formed on these principles must be the best.

## VIII

## FABLES, SIMPLE OR COMPLICATED

Fables are of two sorts, *simple* and *complicated*; for so also are the *actions* themselves of which they are imitations. An action, (having the *continuity* and *unity* prescribed,) I call *simple*, when its catastrophe is produced *without* either *revolution*, or *discovery*: *complicated*, when *with* one, or both. And these should arise from the structure of the fable itself, so as to be the natural consequences, necessary or probable, of what has preceded in the action. For there is a wide difference between incidents that follow *from*, and incidents that follow *only after*, each other.

## IX

## PARTS OF THE FABLE

A *REVOLUTION*, is a change, (such as has already been mentioned,<sup>1</sup>) into the reverse of what is expected from the circumstances of the action; and that, produced, as we have said, by *probable*, or *necessary consequence*.

Thus, in the *Oedipus* [*Tyrannus* of Sophocles], the messenger, meaning to make Oedipus happy, and to relieve him from the dread he was under with respect to his mother, by making known to him his real birth, produces an effect directly contrary to his intention. Thus, also, in the Tragedy of *Lynceus*: Lynceus is led to suffer death, Danaus follows to inflict it; but the event, resulting from the course of the incidents, is, that Danaus is killed, and Lynceus saved.

A *DISCOVERY*, as, indeed, the word implies, is *a change from unknown to known*, happening between those characters whose happiness, or unhappiness, forms the catastrophe of the drama, and terminating in friendship or enmity.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter VII.—“Events that are *unexpected consequences* of each other.”

The best sort of Discovery is that which is accompanied by a Revolution, as in the *Oedipus*.

There are, also, other Discoveries; for inanimate things, of any kind, may be recognized in the same manner; and we may discover whether such a particular thing was, or was not, *done* by such a person:—but the Discovery most appropriated to the *fable*, and the *action*, is that above defined; because such Discoveries, and Revolutions, must excite either *pity* or *terror*; and Tragedy we have defined to be an imitation of *pitiable* and *terrible* actions: and because, also, by them the event, *happy*, or *unhappy*, is produced.<sup>1</sup>

Now Discoveries, being *relative* things, are sometimes of *one* of the persons only, the *other* being already known; and sometimes they are *reciprocal*: thus, *Iphigenia* [In Euripides's *Iphigenia in Tauris*] is discovered to *Orestes* by the letter which she charges him to deliver, and *Orestes* is obliged, by other means, to make himself known to her.

These then are *two* parts of the fable—*Revolution* and *Discovery*. There is a *third*, which we denominate, DISASTERS. The two former have been explained. *Disasters* comprehend all *painful* or *destructive* actions; the exhibition of death, bodily anguish, wounds, and every thing of that kind.

## X

### PARTS INTO WHICH TRAGEDY IS DIVIDED

The parts of Tragedy which are necessary to constitute its *quality*, have been already enumerated. Its *parts* of *quantity*—the *distinct* parts into which it is *divided*—are these: PROLOGUE, EPISODE, EXODE, and CHORUS; which last is also divided into the PARODE, and the STASIMON. These are common to all Tragedies. The *COMMOS* are found in *some* only.

The *Prologue* is all that part of a Tragedy which precedes the *Parode* of the Chorus.—The *Episode*, all that part which is included between *entire Choral Odes*.—The *Exode*,<sup>2</sup> that part which has *no Choral Ode after it*.

<sup>1</sup> See also Chapter XVI.

<sup>2</sup> *Exode*—i.e. the *going out*, or *exit*: the concluding *act*, as we should term it. The Greek tragedies never *finished* with a choral ode.

Of the *Choral* part, the *Parode*<sup>1</sup> is the first *speech* of the whole *Chorus*: the *Stasimon*,<sup>2</sup> includes all those *Choral Odes* that are *without Anapæsts* and *Trochees*.

The *Commos*,<sup>3</sup> is a general lamentation of the *Chorus* and the *Actors* together.

Such are the separate parts into which Tragedy is *divided*. Its parts of *quality* were before explained.

## XI

## WHAT CATASTROPHE, AND WHAT CHARACTER, BEST ADAPTED TO THE PURPOSES OF TRAGEDY

The order of the subject leads us to consider, in the next place, what the Poet should *aim* at, and what *avoid*, in the construction of his fable; and by what means the *purpose* of Tragedy may be best affected.

Now since it is requisite to the perfection of a Tragedy that its plot should be of the *complicated*, not of the *simple* kind, and that it should imitate such actions as excite *terror* and *pity*, (this being the peculiar property of the Tragic imitation,) it follows evidently, in the first place, that the change from prosperity to adversity should not be represented as happening to a *virtuous* character; for this raises disgust, rather than terror, or compassion. Neither should the contrary change, from adversity to prosperity, be exhibited in a *vitious* character: this, of all plans, is the most opposite to the genius of Tragedy, having no one property that it ought to have; for it is neither gratifying in a moral view, nor *affecting*, nor *terrible*. Nor, again, should the fall of a *very bad* man from prosperous to adverse *fortune* be represented: because, though such a subject may be pleasing from its moral

<sup>1</sup> *Parode*—i.e. *entry* of the *Chorus* upon the stage.

<sup>2</sup> *Stasimon*—i.e. *stable*: because, as it is explained, these odes were sung by the choral troop when fixed on the stage, and at rest: whereas the *Parode* is said to have been sung, *as they came on*. Hence, the *trochaic* and *anapæstic* measures, being lively and full of motion, were adapted to the *Parode*, but not to the *Stasimon*.

<sup>3</sup> From a verb signifying to *beat* or *strike*; alluding to the gestures of violent grief.

tendency, it will produce neither pity nor terror. For our *pity* is excited by misfortunes *undeservedly* suffered, and our *terror*, by some *resemblance* between the sufferer and ourselves. Neither of these effects will, therefore, be produced by such an event.

There remains, then, for our choice, the character *between* these extremes; that of a person neither eminently virtuous or just, nor yet, involved in misfortune by deliberate vice, or villainy; but by some error of human frailty: and this person should, also, be some one of high fame and flourishing prosperity. For example, OEDIPUS, THYESTES, or other illustrious men of such families.

## XII

### CATASTROPHE SHOULD BE SINGLE, AND THAT UNHAPPY

Hence it appears, that, to be well constructed, a fable, contrary to the opinion of some, should be *single* rather than *double*; that the change of fortune should not be from adverse to prosperous, but the reverse; and that it should be the consequence, not of vice, but of some great frailty, in a character such as has been described, or *better* rather than *worse*.

These principles are confirmed by experience; for Poets, formerly, admitted almost any story into the number of Tragic subjects; but now, the subjects of the best Tragedies are confined to a few families—to Alcmaeon, Oedipus, Orestes, Meleager, Thyestes, Telephus, and others, the sufferers, or the authors, of some terrible calamity.

The most perfect Tragedy, then, according to the principles of the art, is of this construction. Whence appears the mistake of those critics who censure EURIPIDES for this practice in his Tragedies, many of which terminate unhappily; for this, as we have shewn, is right. And, as the strongest proof of it, we find that upon the stage, and in the dramatic contests, such Tragedies, if they succeed, have always the most Tragic *effect*: and EURIPIDES, though, in other respects, faulty in the conduct of his subjects, seems clearly to be the most *Tragic* of all Poets.

I place in the *second* rank, that kind of fable to which some assign the *first*; that which is of a *double* construction, like the *Odyssey*, and also ends in two opposite events, to the *good*, and to the *bad*, characters. That this passes for the best, is owing to the weakness<sup>1</sup> of the spectators, to whose wishes the Poets accommodate their productions. This kind of pleasure, however, is not the *proper* pleasure of Tragedy, but belongs rather to Comedy; for there, if even the bitterest enemies, like *Orestes* and *Ægisthus*, are introduced, they quit the scene at last in perfect friendship, and no blood is shed on either side.

## XIII

## TERROR AND PITY TO BE EXCITED BY THE ACTION, NOT BY THE DECORATION

Terror and pity may be raised by the *decoration*—the mere *spectacle*; but they may also arise from the circumstances of the *action* itself; which is far preferable, and shews a superior Poet. For the fable should be so constructed, that, without the assistance of the sight, its incidents may excite horror and commiseration in those, who *hear* them only; an effect, which every one, who hears the fable of the *Oedipus*, must experience. But, to produce this effect by means of the decoration, discovers want of art in the Poet; who must also be supplied, by the public, with an *expensive apparatus*.<sup>2</sup>

As to those Poets, who make use of the decoration in order to produce, not the *terrible*, but the *marvellous* only, *their* purpose has nothing in common with that of Tragedy. For we are not to seek for every sort of pleasure from Tragedy, but for that only which is *proper* to the species.

Since, therefore, it is the business of the Tragic Poet to

<sup>1</sup> That weakness which cannot bear strong emotions, even from fictitious distress.

<sup>2</sup> Among other public offices, which the wealthier citizens of Athens were, by turns, called upon to discharge, was that of the *Choragi*, who were obliged, at their own expence, to provide a *chorus*, dresses, and, perhaps, scenes, and the whole decoration of theatrical exhibitions.



give that pleasure, which arises from pity and terror, through *imitation*, it is evident, that he ought to produce that effect by the circumstances of the *action itself*.

## XIV

## OF DISASTROUS INCIDENTS, AND THEIR PROPER MANAGEMENT

Let us, then, see, of what *kind* those incidents are, which appear most terrible, or piteous.

Now, such actions must, of necessity, happen between persons who are either friends, or enemies, or indifferent to each other. If an enemy kills, or purposes to kill, an enemy, in neither case is any commiseration raised in us, beyond what necessarily arises from the nature of the action itself.

The case is the same, when the persons are neither friends nor enemies. But when such disasters happen between friends<sup>1</sup>—when, for instance, the brother kills, or is going to kill, his brother, the son his father, the mother her son, or the reverse—these, and others of a similar kind, are the proper incidents for the Poet's choice. The received Tragic subjects, therefore, he is not at liberty *essentially* to alter; *Clytæmnestra* must die by the hand of *Orestes*, and *Eriphyle* by that of *Alcæon*: but it is his province to invent other subjects, and to make a skilful use of those which he finds already established.—What I mean by a skilful use, I proceed to explain.

The atrocious action may be perpetrated knowingly and intentionally, as was usual with the earlier Poets: and as EURIPIDES, also, has represented *Medea* destroying her children.

It may, likewise, be perpetrated by those, who are ignorant, at the time, of the connection between them and the injured person, which they afterwards discover; like *Oedipus*, in SOPHOCLES. There, indeed, the action itself does not make a part of the drama: the *Alcæon* of *Astydamas*, and *Telegonus* in the *Ulysses Wounded*, furnish instances *within* the Tragedy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle uses this word here, and in other parts of his works, in a wide sense, including *relations*, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Of these two dramas nothing more is known than the little that Aristotle here tells us. In the first, the Poet adhered so far to his-

There is yet a *third* way, where a person upon the point of perpetrating, through ignorance, some dreadful deed, is prevented by a sudden discovery.<sup>1</sup>

Beside these, there is no other proper way. For the action must of necessity be either *done*, or *not done*, and that, either *with knowledge*, or *without*: but of all these ways,<sup>2</sup> that of being ready to execute, knowingly, and yet *not* executing, is the worst; for this is, at the same time, shocking, and yet not Tragic, because it exhibits no disastrous event. It is, therefore, never, or very rarely, made use of. The attempt of *Hæmon* to kill *Creon*, in the *Antigone* [of Sophocles], is an example.

Next to this, is the actual execution of the purpose.

To execute, through ignorance, and afterwards to discover, is better: for thus, the shocking atrociousness is avoided, and, at the same time, the discovery is striking.

But the best of all these ways, is the last. Thus, in the Tragedy of *Cresphontes*, *Merope*, in the very act of putting her son to death, discovers him, and is prevented. In the *Iphigenia* [in *Tauris* of Euripides], the sister, in the same manner, discovers her brother; and in the *Helle*,<sup>3</sup> the son discovers his mother, at the instant when he was going to betray her.

On this account it is, that the subjects of Tragedy, as before remarked, are confined to a small number of families. For it was not to *art*, but to *fortune*,<sup>4</sup> that Poets applied themselves, to find incidents of this nature. Hence the necessity of having recourse to those families, in which such calamities have happened.

tory, as to make Alcæon kill his mother Eriphyle, but with the improvement, (according to Aristotle's idea,) of making him do it *ignorantly*. The story of *Telegonus* is, that he was a son of Ulysses by *Circe*; was sent by her in quest of his father, whom he wounded, without knowing him, in a skirmish relative to some sheep, that he attempted to carry off from the island of Ithaca. See *Odyssey* XI.

<sup>1</sup> As in *Merope*; Aristotle's own example.

<sup>2</sup> There is here much embarrassment and confusion in the original.

<sup>3</sup> Of this Tragedy nothing farther is known.

<sup>4</sup> i.e. to history or tradition [better, to nature.—M. M. M.].—See above, Chapter VI and Chapter XII.

Of the PLOT, or FABLE, and its requisites, enough has now been said.

## XV

## OF THE MANNERS

With respect to the MANNERS, *four* things are to be attended to by the Poet.

*First*, and principally, they should be *good*. Now *manners*, or *character*, belong, as we have said before, to any speech or action that manifests a certain *disposition*, and they are bad, or good, as the disposition manifested is bad, or good. This goodness of manners may be found in persons of every description: the manners of a woman, or of a slave, may be good; though, in general, women are, perhaps, rather bad, than good, and slaves, altogether bad.

The *second* requisite of the manners, is *propriety*. There is a manly character of bravery and fierceness, which cannot, with propriety, be given to a woman.

The *third* requisite is *resemblance*; for this is a different thing from their being *good*, and *proper*, as above described.<sup>1</sup>

The *fourth*, is *uniformity*; for even though the model of the Poet's imitation be some person of ununiform manners, still that person must be represented as *uniformly ununiform*.

We have an example of manners *unnecessarily bad*, in the character of *Menelaus* in the Tragedy of *Orestes*:<sup>2</sup> of *improper* and *unbecoming* manners, in the lamentation of *Ulysses* in *Scylla*, and in the speech of *Menalippe*,<sup>3</sup> of *ununiform* manners,

<sup>1</sup> That is, the manners may be both *good*, and *proper* or *becoming*; and yet not *like*. For example; should a Poet draw *Medea*, gentle, patient, &c. the manners would be both *good*, and *becoming*, but not *like*—not conformable to the historical or traditional character of the *individual*. The *portrait* would be defective.

<sup>2</sup> The *Orestes* of Euripides.—Menelaus, throughout this play, as Mr. Potter has justly remarked, is “represented as an ungrateful, unfeeling, timid, designing poltron.”

<sup>3</sup> Of the *Scylla*, nothing is known.—Some fragments remain of *Menalippe the Wise*, a Tragedy of Euripides, the subject of which is a curiosity. *Menalippe* was delivered of two children, the fruits of a stolen amour with *Neptune*. To conceal her shame, she hid them

in the *Iphigenia* at *Aulis*; for there, the *Iphigenia*, who supplicates for life, has no resemblance to the *Iphigenia* of the conclusion.

In the manners, as in the fable, the Poet should always aim, either at what is *necessary*, or what is *probable*; so that *such* a character shall appear to speak or act, necessarily, or probably, in *such* a manner, and *this* event, to be the necessary or probable consequence of *that*.—Hence it is evident, that the *development* also of a fable should arise out of the fable itself, and not depend upon *machinery*, as in the *Medea*,<sup>1</sup> or in the incidents relative to the return of the Greeks, in the *Iliad*. The proper application of machinery is to such circumstances, as are extraneous to the drama; such, as either happened *before* the time of the action, and could not, by human means, be known; or, are to happen *after*, and require to be foretold: for to the Gods we attribute the knowledge of all things. But nothing *improbable* should be admitted in the incidents of the fable; or, if it cannot be avoided, it should, at least, be confined to such as are *without* the Tragedy itself; as in the *Oedipus* of SOPHOCLES.

Since Tragedy is an imitation of *what is best*, we should follow the example of skilful portrait-painters; who, while they express the peculiar lineaments, and produce a likeness, at the same time improve upon the original. And thus, too, the Poet, when he imitates the manners of *passionate* men, (or of *indolent*, or any other of a similar kind,) should draw an example approaching rather to a good, than to a hard and fero-

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in her father's *cow-house*; where he found them, and, being less of a philosopher than his daughter, took them for a monstrous production of some of his cows, and ordered them to be burned. His daughter, in order to save them, without exposing herself, enters into a long physical argument, upon the principles of *Anaxagoras*, to cure her father of his unphilosophical prejudices about monsters, and portentous births, and to convince him, that these infants *might* be the *natural* children of his cows. Part of this very speech is preserved by *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, and it is this *masculine* philosopher that is here understood to be censured as an *impropriety* of character.

<sup>1</sup> Of Euripides. *Medea* is carried off, at the end of the Tragedy, in a chariot drawn by flying dragons.

cious character: as *Achilles* is drawn, by AGATHO, and by HOMER. These things the Poet should keep in view; and, besides these, whatever relates to those *senses* [sight and hearing] which have a necessary connection with Poetry: for here, also, he may often err.—But of this enough has been said in the treatises already published.

## XVI

## DIFFERENT KINDS OF DISCOVERY

What is meant by a DISCOVERY, has already been explained. Its *kinds* are the following.

*First*, the most inartificial of all, and to which, from poverty of invention, the generality of Poets have recourse—the discovery of *visible signs*. Of these signs, some are *natural*; as, the lance with which the family of the *earth-born Thebans*<sup>1</sup> were marked, or the stars which *Carcinus* has made use of in his *Thyestes*: others are *adventitious*; and of these, some are corporal, as scars; some external, as necklaces, bracelets, &c. or the little boat by which the discovery is made in the Tragedy of *Tyro*.<sup>2</sup> Even these, however, may be employed with more, or less skill. The discovery of *Ulysses*, for example, to his nurse, by means of his scar, is very different from his discovery, by the same means, to the herdsmen.<sup>3</sup> For all those discoveries, in which the sign is produced by way of *proof*, are inartificial. Those, which, like that in the *Washing of Ulysses*,<sup>3</sup> happen *suddenly* and *casually*, are better.

*Secondly*—Discoveries *invented*, at pleasure, by the Poet, and, on that account, still inartificial. For example; in the

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<sup>1</sup> The descendants of the original Thebans, who, according to the fabulous history, sprung from the earth when Cadmus sowed the Dragon's teeth, &c.—This *noble race* are said to have been distinguished by the natural mark of a lance upon their bodies.

<sup>2</sup> Sophocles wrote two Tragedies of this name, neither of them preserved.—The story of Tyro leads us to suppose, that Aristotle means the little boat, trough, or, as some render it, *cradle*, in which Tyro had exposed her children, on, or near, the river: the particular manner of the discovery, it would be in vain to guess.

<sup>3</sup> See *Odyssey*, XIX.



*Iphigenia, Orestes*, after having discovered his sister, discovers himself to her. She, indeed, is discovered by the letter; but *Orestes*, [by verbal proofs;] and these are such as the Poet chuses to make him produce, not such, as arise from the *circumstances* of the *fable*. This kind of discovery, therefore, borders upon the fault of that first mentioned: for, some of the things from which those proofs are drawn, are even such, as might have been actually produced as *visible signs*.

Another instance, is the discovery by the sound of the shuttle in the *Tereus* of SOPHOCLES.

*Thirdly*—The Discovery occasioned by *memory*; as, when some recollection is excited by the view of a particular object. Thus, in the *Cyprians* of *Dicæogenes*, a discovery is produced by tears shed at the sight of a picture: and thus, in the *Tale of Alcinous*, Ulysses, listening to the bard, recollects, weeps, and is discovered.<sup>1</sup>

*Fourthly*—The discovery occasioned by *reasoning* or *inference*; such as that in the *Choëphoræ*; “The person, who is arrived, resembles me—no one resembles me but Orestes—it must be he!” And that of *Polyides* the Sophist, in his *Iphigenia*,<sup>2</sup> for the conclusion of Orestes was natural—“It had been his sister’s lot to be sacrificed, and it was now his own!” That, also, in the *Tydeus* of *Theoclytus*:—“He came to find his son, and he himself must perish!” And thus, the daughters of *Phineus*, in the Tragedy denominated from them,<sup>3</sup> viewing the place to which they were led, *infer* their fate:—“*there* they were to die, for *there* they were exposed!” There is also a compound sort of discovery, arising from *false inference* in the audience; as in *Ulysses the False Messenger*: he asserts, that he shall know the bow, which he had not seen;

<sup>1</sup> *Odyssey*, VIII.

<sup>2</sup> The subject appears to have been the same, as that of the *Iphigenia in Tauris* of Euripides. We are to suppose, that *Orestes* was discovered to his sister by this natural exclamation, at the moment when he was led to the altar of Diana to be sacrificed.

<sup>3</sup> Of this, and the preceding Tragedy, we know nothing, but what we learn here: i.e. that in the one, a *father*, and in the other, the *daughters* of *Phineus*, were discovered, and, probably, saved, by those exclamations.

the audience falsely infer, that a discovery, by that means, will follow.<sup>1</sup>

But, of all Discoveries, the *best* is that, which arises from the *action itself*, and in which a *striking* effect is produced by *probable* incidents. Such is that in the *Oedipus* of SOPHOCLES: and that in the *Iphigenia*; for nothing more natural than her desire of conveying the letter. Such discoveries are the best, because they alone are effected without the help of *invented proofs*, or bracelets, &c.<sup>1</sup>

Next to these, are the discoveries by *inference*.<sup>2</sup>

## XVII

### PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS FOR THE TRAGIC POET

The Poet, both when he plans, and when he writes, his Tragedy, should put himself, as much as possible, in the place of a spectator; for, by this means, *seeing* everything distinctly, as if present at the action, he will discern what is proper, and no inconsistencies will escape him. The fault objected to *Carcinus* is a proof of this. *Amphiaraus* had left the temple: this, the Poet, for want of conceiving the action to pass before his eyes, overlooked; but in the representation, the audience were disgusted, and the piece condemned.

In composing, the Poet should even, as much as possible, be an *actor*: for, by natural sympathy, *they* are most persuasive and affecting, who are under the influence of actual passion. We share the agitation of those, who appear to be truly agitated—the anger of those, who appear to be truly angry.

Hence it is, that Poetry demands, either great natural quickness of parts, or an enthusiasm allied to madness. By the first of these, we mould ourselves with facility to the imitation of every form; by the other, transported out of ourselves, we *become* what we *imagine*.

When the Poet invents a subject, he should, first, draw a general sketch of it, and afterwards give it the detail of its

<sup>1</sup> The original here is all incurable corruption, and impenetrable obscurity.

<sup>2</sup> This line is undoubtedly out of place; it should precede *Fourthly* on page 265.—M. M. M.

Episodes, and extend it. The general argument, for instance, of the *Iphigenia* [*in Tauris*], should be considered in this way: "A virgin, on the point of being sacrificed, is imperceptibly conveyed away from the altar, and transported to another country, where it was the custom to sacrifice all strangers to Diana. Of these rites she is appointed priestess. It happens, some time after, that her brother arrives there." But *why?*—because an oracle had commanded him, for some reason exterior to the general plan. *For what purpose?*—This, also, is exterior to the plan.—"He arrives, is seized, and, at the instant that he is going to be sacrificed, the discovery is made."—And this may be, either in the way of *Euripides*, or like that of *Polyides*, by the natural reflection of *Orestes*, that—"it was his fate also, as it had been his sister's, to be sacrificed;" by which exclamation he is saved.

After this, the Poet, when he has given names to his characters, should proceed to the Episodes of his action; and he must take care, that these belong *properly* to the subject; like that of the madness of *Orestes*, which occasions his being taken, and his escape by means of the ablution. In dramatic Poetry the Episodes are short; but, in the Epic, they are the means of drawing out the poem to its proper length. The *general* story of the ODYSSEY, for example, lies in a small compass: "A certain man is supposed to be absent from his own country for many years—he is persecuted by *Neptune*, deprived of all his companions, and left alone. At home, his affairs are in disorder—the suitors of his wife dissipating his wealth, and plotting the destruction of his son. Tossed by many tempests, he at length arrives, and, making himself known to some of his family, attacks his enemies, destroys them, and remains himself in safety." This is the *essential*; the rest is *Episode*.

## XVIII

### COMPLICATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLOT

Every Tragedy consists of two parts—the *complication*, and the *development*.<sup>1</sup> The complication is often formed by

<sup>1</sup> Literally, the *tying*, and *untying*.

incidents supposed *prior* to the action, and by a part, also, of those that are *within* the action; the rest, form the development. I call *complication*, all that is between the beginning of the piece, and the last part, where the change of fortune commences:—*development*, all between the beginning of that change, and the conclusion. Thus, in the *Lyncæus* of *Theodectes*,<sup>1</sup> the events antecedent to the action, and the seizure of the child, constitute the *complication*; the *development* is from the accusation of murder to the end.

## XIX

## DIFFERENT KINDS OF TRAGEDY

There are four *kinds* of Tragedy, deducible from so many *parts*, which have been mentioned. One kind is the COMPLICATED; where all depends on *revolution* and *discovery*: another is the DISASTROUS, such as those on the subject of *Ajax* or *Ixion*: another, the MORAL,<sup>2</sup> as the *Phthiotides*, and the *Peleus*: and, fourthly, the SIMPLE, such as the *Phorcides*,<sup>3</sup> the *Prometheus*, and all those Tragedies, the scene of which is laid in the infernal regions.

It should be the Poet's aim to make himself master of all these manners; of as many of them, at least, as possible, and those the best: especially, considering the captious criticism, to which, in these days, he is exposed. For, the public, having now seen different Poets excel in each of these different kinds, expect every *single* Poet to unite in himself, and to surpass, the peculiar excellences of them *all*.

One Tragedy may justly be considered as the same with another, or different, not according as the subjects, but, rather, according as the complication and development, are the same or different.—Many Poets, when they have *complicated* well,

<sup>1</sup> A lost play.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. In which the delineation of *manners* or *character* is predominant.

<sup>3</sup> *Æschylus* wrote a Tragedy so named. It is difficult to imagine what he could make of these three curious personages, who were *born old women*, lived under ground, and had but one eye among them, which they used by turns; carrying it, I suppose, in a case, like a pair of spectacles.

*develop* badly. They should endeavour to deserve equal applause in both.

## XX

## TOO GREAT EXTENT OF PLAN TO BE AVOIDED

We must also be attentive to what has been often mentioned, and not construct a *Tragedy* upon an *Epic* plan. By an *Epic* plan, I mean, a fable composed of *many fables*; as if any one, for instance, should take the entire fable of the *ILIAD* for the subject of a *Tragedy*. In the *Epic Poem*, the length of the whole admits of a proper magnitude in the parts; but in the drama, the effect of such a plan is far different from what is expected. As a proof of this, those Poets, who have formed the *whole* of the destruction of Troy into a *Tragedy*, instead of confining themselves (as *Euripides*, but not *Æschylus*, has done, in the story of *Niobe*.) to a *part*, have either been condemned in the representation, or have contended without success. Even *Agatho* has failed on this account, and on this only; for, in *revolutions*, and in actions also of the *simple* kind, these Poets succeed wonderfully in what they aim at; and that is, the union of *Tragic effect* with *moral tendency*: as when, for example, a character of great wisdom, but without integrity, is deceived, like *Sisyphus*; or, a brave, but unjust man, conquered. Such events, as *Agatho* says, are probable, "as it is probable, in general, that many things should happen contrary to probability."

## XXI

## OF THE CHORUS

The CHORUS should be considered as one of the persons in the drama; should be a *part* of the *whole*, and a sharer in the action: not as in *Euripides*, but, as in *Sophocles*. As for other Poets—their choral songs have no more connection with their subject, than with that of any other *Tragedy*: and hence, they are now become detached pieces, inserted at pleasure:<sup>1</sup> a

<sup>1</sup> It is curious to trace the gradual extinction of the Chorus. At first, it was *all*; then, relieved by the intermixture of dialogue, but



practice first introduced by *Agatho*. Yet where is the difference, between this arbitrary insertion of an *Ode*, and the transposition of a *speech*, or even of a whole *Episode*, from one Tragedy to another?

## XXII

## OF THE SENTIMENTS

Of the other parts of Tragedy enough has now been said. We are next to consider the **DICTION**, and the **SENTIMENTS**.

For what concerns the *sentiments*, we refer to the principles laid down in the books on *Rhetoric*; for to *that* subject they more properly belong. The *sentiments* include *whatever is the object of speech*; as, for instance, to prove, to confute, to move the passions—pity, terror, anger, and the like; to amplify, or to diminish. But it is evident, that, with respect to the *things themselves* also, when the Poet would make them appear pitiable, or terrible, or great, or probable, he must draw from the same sources; with this difference only, that, in the *drama*, these things must appear to be such, without being *shewn* to be such; whereas, in *oratory*, they must be *made* to appear so by the speaker, and *in consequence* of what he *says*: otherwise, what need of an orator, if they already appear so, in *themselves*, and not through his eloquence?

## XXIII

## OF THE DICTION. [TO THE END OF PART II.]

With respect to **DICTION**, one part of its theory is that, which treats of the *figures of speech*; such as, *commanding*, *entreating*, *relating*, *menacing*, *interrogating*, *answering*, and the like. But this belongs, properly, to the art of *acting*, and

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still *principal*; then, *subordinate* to the dialogue; then digressive, and *ill connected* with the piece; then borrowed from *other pieces* at pleasure—and so on, to the fiddles and the act-tunes. The performers in the *orchestra* of a modern theatre, are little, I believe, aware, that they occupy the *place*, and may consider themselves as the lineal descendants, of the antient *Chorus*.—*Orchestra* was the name of that part of the antient theatre, which was appropriated to the Chorus.

to the professed masters of that kind. The *Poet's* knowledge, or ignorance, of these things, cannot any way materially affect the credit of his art. For who will suppose there is any justice in the cavil of *Protagoras*—that, in the words, “The wrath, O goddess, *sing*,”<sup>1</sup> the Poet, where he intended a *prayer*, had expressed a *command*: for he insists, that to say, *Do this*, or *do it not*, is to *command*.—This subject, therefore, we pass over, as belonging to an art distinct from that of Poetry.

## XXIV

## ANALYSIS OF DICTION, OR LANGUAGE IN GENERAL

TO ALL DICTION, belong the following parts:—the *letter*, the *syllable*, the *conjunction*, the *noun*, the *verb*, the *article*, the *case*, the *discourse* or *speech*.

1. A *letter* is an indivisible sound; yet not *all* such sounds are letters, but those only that are capable of forming an *intelligible sound*. For there are indivisible sounds of brute creatures; but no *such* sounds are called *letters*. Letters are of three kinds; *vowels*, *semivowels*, and *mute*s. The *vowel*, is that, which has a distinct sound *without* articulation; as A, or O.—The *semivowel*, that which has a distinct sound *with* articulation, as S, and R. The *mute*, that which, with articulation, has yet no sound by itself; but joined with one of those letters that have some sound, becomes audible; as G, and D. These all differ from each other, as they are produced by different configurations, and in different parts, of the mouth: as they are aspirated or smooth, long or short; as their tone is *acute*, *grave*, or *intermediate*: the detail of all which, is the business of the *metrical* treatises.

2. A *syllable*, is a sound without signification, composed of a mute and a vowel: for GR, without A, is not a syllable; with A, as GRA, it is. But these differences, also, are the subject of the *metrical* art.

3. A *conjunction*, is a sound without signification, \* \* \* \* \* of such a nature, as, out of *several* sounds, each of them significant, to form *one* significant sound.

<sup>1</sup> The opening of the *Iliad*.

4. An *article*, is a sound without signification, which marks the *beginning*, or the *end* of a sentence; or *distinguishes*, as when we say, THE word *phēmi*—THE word *peri*, &c.

\* \* \* \* \*

5. A *noun*, is a sound, composed of other sounds; significant, without expression of *time*; and of which no part is *by itself significant*: for even in *double* words, the parts are not taken in the sense that *separately* belongs to them. Thus, in the word *Theodorus*, *dorus* is not significant.<sup>1</sup>

6. A *verb*, is a sound composed of other sounds;—significant—with expression of *time*—and of which, as of the noun, no *part* is *by itself significant*. Thus, in the words, *man*, *white*, indication of *time* is not included: in the words, *he walks*, *he walked*, &c. it *is* included; the one expressing the *present* time, the other the *past*.

7. *Cases* belong to nouns and verbs. Some cases express *relation*; as *of*, *to*, and the like: others, *number*; as *man*, or *men*, &c. Others relate to *action* or *pronunciation*: as those of *interrogation*, of *command*, &c. for, *hebadise* [*did he go?*] and, *badize* [*go,*] are verbal *cases* of that kind.

8. *Discourse*, or *speech*, is a sound significant, composed of other sounds, *some* of which are significant *by themselves*: for *all* discourse is not composed of verbs and nouns;—the definition of Man,<sup>2</sup> for instance. Discourse, or speech, may subsist without a *verb*: *some* significant part, however, it *must* contain; significant, as the word *Cleon* is, in, "*Cleon walks*."

A *discourse* or *speech* is *one*, in two senses; either as it *signifies one thing*, or, *several things made one* by *conjunction*. Thus, the *Iliad* is *one* by *conjunction*: the definition of Man, by *signifying one thing*.

<sup>1</sup> The name, *Theodorus*, is derived from *Theos*, God, and *Doron*, a gift. Yet when the word is used, it stands for neither of these ideas, but merely for the *individual* so named.

<sup>2</sup> The definition alluded to appears to be this, literally rendered: "*A terrestrial animal with two feet*."

## XXV

## DIFFERENT KINDS OF WORDS

Of WORDS, some are *single*—by which I mean, composed of parts not significant; and some *double*: of which last, some have one part significant, and the other not significant; and some, both parts significant. A word may also be *triple*, *quadruple*, &c. like many of those used by the *Megaliotæ*; as, *Hermocaïcoxanthus*.<sup>1</sup> Every word is either *common*, or *foreign*, or *metaphorical*, or *ornamental*, or *invented*, or *extended*, or *contracted*, or *altered*.

By COMMON words, I mean, such as are in general and established *use*.—By FOREIGN, such as belong to a different language: so that the same word may, evidently, be both *common*, and *foreign*, though not to the same people. The word *Sigynôn*, to the Cyprians is *common*, to us, *foreign*.

A METAPHORICAL word is a word transferred from its *proper* sense: either from *genus* to *species*, or from *species* to *genus*, or from *one species* to *another*, or in the way of *analogy*.

1. From *genus* to *species*: as,

Secure in yonder port my vessel STANDS.<sup>2</sup>

For, *to be at anchor*, is one *species* of *standing* or being *fixed*.

2. From *species* to *genus*: as,

- - - - - to Ulysses,

A THOUSAND generous deeds we owe---.<sup>3</sup>

For *a thousand* is a certain *definite many*, which is here used for *many*, in *general*.

3. From *one species* to *another*.<sup>4</sup>

4. In the way of *analogy*—when, of four terms, the

<sup>1</sup> A strange word, and how it was applied we know not. It appears to be a consolidation of three Asiatic rivers—the *Hermus*, the *Caïcus*, and the *Xanthus*.

<sup>2</sup> From the *Odyssey*.

<sup>3</sup> From the *Iliad*.

<sup>4</sup> This, and the next species, only, answer to what we call *metaphor*—the metaphor founded on *resemblance*. The two first species belong to the trope denominated, since Aristotle's time, *Synecdoche*.

*second* bears the same relation to the *first*, as the *fourth* to the *third*; in which case, the *fourth* may be substituted for the *second*, and the *second* for the *fourth*. And, sometimes, the *proper* term is also introduced, besides its *relative* term.

Thus, a *cup* bears the same relation to *Bacchus*, as a *shield* to *Mars*. A shield, therefore, may be called *the cup of Mars*, and a cup, *the shield of Bacchus*. Again—evening being to day, what old age is to life, the evening may be called *the old age of the day*, and old age, *the evening of life*; or, as *Empedocles* has expressed it, “Life’s setting sun.” It sometimes happens, that there is no *proper* analogous term, answering to the term *borrowed*; which yet may be used in the same manner, as if there were. For instance: to *sow*, is the term appropriated to the action of dispersing seed upon the earth; but the dispersion of rays from the sun is expressed by no appropriated term; it is, however, with respect to the *sun’s light*, what *sowing* is with respect to *seed*. Hence the Poet’s expression, of the sun—

“ - - - sowing abroad  
“His heaven-created flame.”

There is, also, *another* way of using this kind of metaphor, by adding to the borrowed word a negation of some of those qualities, which belong to it in its *proper* sense: as if, instead of calling a shield *the cup of Mars*, we should call it *the wineless cup*.

AN INVENTED word, is a word never before used by any one, but coined by the Poet himself; for such, it appears, there are; as *branches* for *horns*, or *supplicator* for *priest*.

A word is EXTENDED, when for the proper vowel a longer is substituted, or a syllable is inserted.—A word is CONTRACTED, when some part of it is retrenched.

AN ALTERED word, is a word, of which *part* remains in its usual state, and *part* is of the Poet’s making.

Farther; NOUNS are divided into *masculine*, *feminine*, and *neuter*. The *masculine* are those which end in *n*, *r*, *s*, or in some letter compounded of *s* and a *mute*; these are two, *ps* and *x*.—The *feminine*, are those which end in the vowels *always long*, as *e*, or *ō*; or, in *a*, of the *doubtful* vowels: so that



the masculine and the feminine terminations are equal in number; for as to *ps* and *x*, they are the same with terminations in *s*. No noun ends in a mute, or a short vowel. There are but *three* ending in *ī*; *five* ending in *y*.

The *neuter* terminate in these two last-mentioned vowels, and in *n* and *s*.

## XXVI

## OF POETIC DICTION

The excellence of diction consists in being *perspicuous* without being *mean*. The most perspicuous is that which is composed of *common* words: but, at the same time, it is *mean*. Such is the Poetry of *Cleophon*, and that of *Sthenelus*. That language, on the contrary, is elevated, and remote from the vulgar idiom, which employs *unusual* words: by *unusual*, I mean, *foreign*, *metaphorical*, *extended*—all, in short, that are not *common* words. Yet, should a Poet compose his diction entirely of such words, the result would be, either an *ænigma*, or a barbarous jargon: an *ænigma*, if composed of *metaphors*; a barbarous jargon, if composed of *foreign* words.—For the essence of an *ænigma* consists in *putting together things apparently inconsistent and impossible, and, at the same time, saying nothing but what is true*. Now this cannot be effected by the mere arrangement of the words; by the *metaphorical use* of them, it may; as in this *ænigma*:

A man I once beheld, [and wondering view'd,]

Who, on another, brass with fire had GLEW'D.<sup>1</sup>

With respect to *barbarism*, it arises from the use of *foreign* words. A judicious intermixture is, therefore, requisite.

Thus, the *foreign* word, the *metaphorical*, the *ornamental*, and the other species before mentioned, will raise the language above the vulgar idiom, and *common* words will give it perspicuity. But nothing contributes more considerably to produce clearness, without vulgarity, of diction, than *extensions*, *contractions*, and *alterations*, of words: for here, the variation from the proper form, being *unusual*, will give *elevation* to the expression; and, at the same time, what is retained of *usual*

<sup>1</sup> The operation of *cupping* is meant.

speech will give it *clearness*. It is without reason, therefore, that some critics have censured these modes of speech, and ridiculed the Poet [Homer] for the use of them; as old *Euclid*<sup>1</sup> did, objecting, that “versification would be an easy business, if it were permitted to lengthen words at pleasure:”—and then giving a burlesque example of that sort of diction: as,

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*  
\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*<sup>2</sup>

Undoubtedly, when these licences appear to be thus *purposely* used, the thing becomes ridiculous. In the employment of *all* the species of *unusual* words, moderation is necessary: for metaphors, foreign words, or any of the others, improperly used, and with a *design* to be ridiculous, would produce the same effect. But how great a difference is made by a *proper* and temperate use of such words, may be seen in *heroic* verse. Let any one only substitute *common* words in the place of the metaphorical, the foreign, and others of the same kind, and he will be convinced of the truth of what I say. For example: the same Iambic verse occurs in *Æschylus* and in *Euripides*; but, by means of a single alteration—the substitution of a *foreign*, for a *common* and *usual* word, one of these verses appears beautiful, the other ordinary. For *Æschylus*, in his *Philoctetes*,<sup>3</sup> says - - -

The cankerous wound that *eats* [ēsthici] my flesh.—

But *Euripides*, instead of *eats* uses *banquets upon* [thoinatai].

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*

*Ariphrades*, also, endeavoured to throw ridicule upon the Tragic Poets, for making use of such expressions as no one would think of using in common speech.

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*

Now it is precisely owing to their being *not* in common use,

<sup>1</sup> Not the geometrician, but Euclid of Megara, a philosopher.

<sup>2</sup> I have omitted the examples—two lines of incurable corruption.

<sup>3</sup> We have neither of the tragedies here alluded to.

<sup>4</sup> We have omitted other illustrations difficult to render into English.

that such expressions have the effect of giving elevation to the diction. But this he did not know.

To employ with propriety any of these modes of speech—the double words, the foreign, &c.—is a great excellence: but the greatest of all, is to be happy in the use of *metaphor*; for it is this alone which cannot be acquired, and which, consisting in a quick discernment of *resemblances*, is a certain mark of genius.

Of the different kinds of words, the *double* are best suited to Dithyrambic Poetry; the *foreign* to Heroic; the *metaphorical* to Iambic. In Heroic Poetry, indeed, they have *all* their place; but to Iambic verse,<sup>1</sup> which is, as much as may be, an imitation of common speech, those words which are used in common speech are best adapted; and such are, the *common*, the *metaphorical*, and the *ornamental*.

Concerning TRAGEDY, and the imitation by ACTION, enough has now been said.

### PART III OF THE EPIC POEM

#### I

##### IN WHAT EPIC AND TRAGIC POETRY AGREE.

WITH respect to that species of Poetry which imitates by NARRATION, and in *hexameter* verse, it is obvious, that the *fable* ought to be dramatically constructed, like that of Tragedy: and that it should have for its subject *one entire* and *perfect action*, having a *beginning*, a *middle*, and an *end*; so that, forming, like an animal, a *complete whole*, it may afford its *proper*<sup>2</sup> pleasure: widely differing, in its construction, from history, which necessarily treats, not of *one action*, but of *one time*; and of *all* the events that happened, to one person, or to many, during that time; events, the *relation* of which,

<sup>1</sup> The verse of *Tragedy*. See Part I, Chapter VII.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Opposed, (as appears from what follows,) to that which *history* gives. *Unity of interest* is essential to the pleasure we expect from the Epic Poem; and this cannot exist, at least, in the degree required, without *unity of action*.

to each other, is merely casual.<sup>1</sup> For, as the naval action at Salamis, and the battle with the Carthaginians in Sicily, were events of *the same time*, unconnected by any relation to a *common end*, or *purpose*; so also, in *successive* events, we sometimes see one thing *follow* another, without being *connected* to it by such relation. And this is the practice of the generality of *Poets*. Even in this, therefore, as we have before observed,<sup>2</sup> the superiority of HOMER'S genius is apparent, that he did not attempt to bring the *whole* war, though an *entire* action with *beginning* and *end*, into his Poem. It would have been too vast an object, and not *easily comprehended in one view*,<sup>3</sup> or had he forced it into a moderate compass, it would have been perplexed by its variety.<sup>4</sup> Instead of this, selecting one *part* only of the war, he has, from the rest, introduced many Episodes—such as the *catalogue of the ships*, and others—by which he has diversified his Poem. Other Poets take for their subject the actions of one *person*, or of one period of *time*, or an action which, though *one*, is composed of too many parts. Thus, the author of the *Cypriacs*, and of the *Little Iliad*. Hence it is, that the *ILIAD*, and the *ODYSSEY*, each of them, furnish matter for one Tragedy, or two, at most; but from the *Cypriacs* many may be taken, and from the *Little Iliad*, more than eight; as, *The Contest for the Armour*,<sup>5</sup> *Philoctetes*, *Neoptolemus*, *Eurypylos*, *The Vagrant*, *The Spartan Women*, *The Fall of Troy*, *The Return of the Fleet*, *Sinon*, and *The Trojan Women*.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare, Part II. Chapters V, VII, and VIII.

<sup>2</sup> Part II. Chapter V.

<sup>3</sup> See Part II. Chapter IV.

<sup>4</sup> Because "*the length of the whole would*" then "*not admit of a proper magnitude in the parts*"; and, thus, an *Epic Poem* constructed upon an *historical plan*, would be exactly in the same case with a *Tragedy* "*constructed on an Epic plan*." See Part II. Chapter XX.

<sup>5</sup> So called, to distinguish it from the *Iliad* of Homer, of which it seems to have been a continuation. [See article The Epic Poets after Homer in Volume II of present work.—M. M. M.]

<sup>6</sup> i.e. Between Ajax and Ulysses. *Æschylus* wrote a Tragedy on this subject, of which the *Ajax* of *Sophocles* is the sequel.

<sup>7</sup> Of these dramas the *Philoctetes* of *Sophocles*, and *The Trojan Women* of *Euripides* alone remain.



Again—the *Epic* Poem must also agree with the *Tragic*, as to its *kinds*: it must be *simple*, or *complicated*, *moral*, or *disastrous*.<sup>1</sup> Its *parts*, also, setting aside Music and Decoration, are the same;<sup>2</sup> for it requires *Revolutions*, *Discoveries*, and *Disasters*; and it must be furnished with proper *sentiments* and *diction*: of *all* which HOMER gave both the first, and the most perfect, example. Thus, of his two Poems, the *Iliad* is of the *simple* and *disastrous* kind; the *Odyssey*, *complicated*, (for it abounds throughout with discoveries,) and *moral*. Add to this, that in *language* and *sentiments* he has surpassed all Poets.

## II

## IN WHAT THEY DIFFER

The *Epic* Poem *differs* from Tragedy, in the *length* of its *plan*, and in its *metre*.

With respect to *length*, a sufficient measure has already been assigned. It should be such, as to admit of our *comprehending at one view the beginning and the end*: and this would be the case, if the *Epic* Poem were reduced from its ancient length, so as not to exceed that of such a number of Tragedies, as are performed successively at one hearing. But there is a circumstance in the nature of *Epic* Poetry which affords it peculiar latitude in the extension of its plan. It is not in the power of Tragedy to imitate several different actions performed at the *same time*; it can imitate only that *one* which occupies the stage, and in which the actors are employed. But, the *Epic* imitation, being *narrative*, admits of many such simultaneous incidents, properly related to the subject, which swell the Poem to a considerable size.

And this gives it a great advantage, both in point of *magnificence*, and, also, as it enables the Poet to relieve his hearer, and *diversify* his work, by a variety of *dissimilar* Episodes: for it is to the satiety naturally arising from similarity that Tragedies frequently owe their ill success.

With respect to *metre*, the heroic is established by experi-

<sup>1</sup> See Part II. Chapter XIX.

<sup>2</sup> Part I. Chapter IX.



ence as the most proper; so that, should any one compose a *narrative* Poem in any other, or in a variety of metres, he would be thought guilty of a great impropriety. For the heroic is the gravest and most majestic of all measures; and hence it is, that it peculiarly admits the use of *foreign* and *metaphorical* expressions; for in this respect also, the *narrative* imitation is abundant and various beyond the rest. But the Iambic and Trochaic have more *motion*; the latter being adapted to *dance*, the other to *action* and *business*. To *mix* these different metres, as *Charemon* has done, would be still more absurd. No one, therefore, has ever attempted to compose a Poem of an extended plan in any other than heroic verse; nature itself, as we before observed,<sup>1</sup> pointing out the proper choice.

## III

## EPIC NARRATION SHOULD BE DRAMATIC AND IMITATIVE

Among the many just claims of HOMER to our praise, this is one—that he is the only Poet who seems to have understood what part in his Poem it was proper for him to take *himself*. The Poet, in his own person, should speak as little as possible; for he is not then the *imitator*. But other Poets, ambitious to figure throughout, themselves, *imitate* but little, and seldom. HOMER, after a few preparatory lines, immediately introduces a man, a woman, or some other character,<sup>2</sup> for all have their *character*—no where are the *manners* neglected.

## IV

## EPIC ADMITS THE WONDERFUL MORE EASILY AND IN A GREATER DEGREE THAN TRAGEDY

The *surprising* is necessary in *Tragedy*,<sup>3</sup> but the Epic Poem goes farther, and admits even the *improbable* and *incredible*, from which the highest degree of the surprising results, because, there, the action is not *seen*. The circumstan-

<sup>1</sup> Part I. Chapter VII.

<sup>2</sup> As gods, goddesses, allegorical beings, &c.

<sup>3</sup> See above, Part II. Chapter VII.

ces, for example, of the pursuit of Hector by Achilles, are such, as upon the stage, would appear ridiculous;—the Grecian army standing still, and taking no part in the pursuit, and Achilles making signs to them, by the motion of his head, not to interfere.<sup>1</sup> But in the Epic Poem this escapes our notice. Now the *wonderful* always pleases; as is evident from the additions which men always make in relating any thing, in order to gratify the hearers.

## V

## FICTION HOW MADE TO PASS AS TRUTH

It is from HOMER principally, that other Poets have learned the art of *feigning well*. It consists in a sort of *sophism*. When *one thing* is observed to be constantly accompanied, or followed, by *another*, men are apt to conclude, that, if the latter *is*, or *has happened*, the former must also *be*, or must *have happened*. But this is an error. \* \* \* \* \* For, knowing the *latter* to be true, the mind is betrayed into the false inference, that the *first* is true also.

## VI

## OF THE IMPROBABLE AND ABSURD

The Poet should prefer *impossibilities* which *appear probable*, to such things as, though *possible*, appear *improbable*. Far from producing a plan made up of improbable incidents, he should, if possible, admit no one circumstance of that kind; or, if he does, it should be *exterior* to the *action* itself, like the ignorance of *Oedipus* concerning the manner in which *Laius died*;<sup>2</sup> not *within* the drama, like the narrative of what

<sup>1</sup> Iliad, xxii.—Perhaps, the idea of stopping a whole army by a nod, or shake of the head, (a circumstance distinctly mentioned by Homer, but sunk in Mr. Pope's version.) was the absurdity here *principally* meant. If this whole Homeric scene were represented on our stage, in the best manner possible, there can be no doubt, that the effect would justify Aristotle's observation. It would certainly set the audience in a roar.

<sup>2</sup> See the beginning of the *Oedipus* of Sophocles.

happened at the Pythian games, in the *Electra*; or, in *The Mysians*,<sup>1</sup> the man who travels from Tegea to Mysia without speaking. To say, that *without* these circumstances the fable would have been destroyed, is a ridiculous excuse: the Poet should take care, from the first, not to construct his fable in that manner. If, however, anything of this kind has been admitted, and yet is made to pass under some colour of probability, it may be allowed, though even, in itself, *absurd*. Thus in the *Odyssey*,<sup>2</sup> the improbable account of the manner in which *Ulysses* was landed upon the shore of Ithaca, is such, as in the hands of an ordinary Poet, would evidently have been intolerable: but here, the absurdity is concealed under the various beauties, of other kinds, with which the Poet has embellished it.

The *Diction* should be most laboured in the *idle* parts of the Poem—those, in which neither *manners*, nor *sentiments* prevail; for the manners and the sentiments are only obscured by too splendid a diction.

## PART IV

### OF CRITICAL OBJECTIONS, AND THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THEY ARE TO BE ANSWERED

#### I

#### PRINCIPLES ON WHICH POETRY IS TO BE DEFENDED

WITH respect to CRITICAL OBJECTIONS, and the ANSWERS to them, the *number* and *nature* of the different *sources*, from which they may be drawn, will be clearly understood, if we consider them in the following manner.

1. The Poet, being an *imitator*, like the painter or any other artist of that kind, must necessarily, when he imitates, have in view one of these *three* objects;—he must represent things, *such as they were, or are*,<sup>3</sup>—or *such as they are said to be, and believed to be*,—or, *such as they should be*.

<sup>1</sup> A lost tragedy.

<sup>2</sup> Book XIII.

<sup>3</sup> Compare Part I. Chapter III.

2. Again: all this he is to express in *words*, either *common*, or *foreign* and *metaphorical*—or varied by some of those many *modifications* and *peculiarities* of language, which are the privilege of Poets.

3. To this we must add, that *what is right* in the *Poetic* art, is a distinct consideration from *what is right* in the *political*, or any *other* art. The faults of *Poetry* are of two kinds, *essential* and *accidental*. If the Poet has undertaken to *imitate* without talents for imitation, his *Poetry* will be *essentially* faulty. But if he is right in applying himself to *Poetic* imitation, yet in imitating is occasionally wrong; as, if a horse, for example, were represented moving both his right legs at once:<sup>1</sup>—or, if he has committed *mistakes*, or described things *impossible*, with respect to *other arts*, that of *Physic*, for instance, or any other—all *such* faults, whatever they may be, are not *essential*, but *accidental* faults, in the *Poetry*.

## II

### APPLICATION OF THE LAST PRINCIPLE

To the foregoing considerations, then, we must have recourse, in order to obviate the doubts and objections of the critics.

For, in the *first* place, suppose the Poet to have represented things *impossible* with respect to some *other* art. This is certainly a fault. Yet it may be an *excusable* fault, provided the *end* of the *Poet's* art be more effectually obtained by it; that is, according to what has already been said of that *end*, if, by this means, that, or any other part, of the Poem, is made to produce a more *striking effect*. The pursuit of Hector is an instance. If, indeed, this end might as well, or nearly as well, have been attained, without departing from the principles of the particular art in question, the fault, in that case, could not be justified; since faults of *every* kind should, if possible, be avoided.

Still we are to consider, farther, whether a fault be in things *essential* to the *Poetic* art, or foreign and *incidental* to

<sup>1</sup> So he does when he paces, which probably the Greek horses never did.—M. M. M.

it: for it is a far more pardonable fault to be ignorant, for instance, that a hind has no horns,<sup>1</sup> than to *paint* one *badly*.

## III

## APPLICATION OF THE FIRST PRINCIPLE

Farther: If it be objected to the Poet, that he has not represented things conformably to *truth*, he may answer, that he has represented them as they *should* be. This was the answer of *Sophocles*—that “he drew mankind such as they *should* be; *Euripides*, such as they *are*.” And this is the proper answer.

But if the Poet has represented things in neither of these ways, he may answer, that he has represented them as they are *said* and *believed* to be. Of this kind are the poetical descriptions of the Gods. It cannot, perhaps, be said, that they are either what is *best*, or what is *true*; but, as *Xenophanes* says, opinions “taken up at random:” these are things, however, not “*clearly known*.”

Again—What the Poet has exhibited is, perhaps, not what is *best*, but it is the *fact*; as in the passage about the arms of the sleeping soldiers:

- - - *fixed upright in the earth*  
Their spears stood by.<sup>2</sup> - - -

For such was the custom at that time, as it is now among the Illyrians.

## IV

## CENSURE OF IMMORAL SPEECH OR ACTION, HOW TO BE EXAMINED

In order to judge whether what is *said*, or *done*, by any character, be *well*, or *ill*, we are not to consider that speech or action *alone*, whether *in itself* it be *good*, or *bad*, but also *by* whom it is spoken or done, *to* whom, at what *time*, in what

<sup>1</sup> “*A hind with golden horns*,” is expressly mentioned by Pindar in his 3d Olympic Ode, and by other Greek Poets. This inaccuracy in *natural history* had probably been the subject of critical cavil.

<sup>2</sup> *Iliad*, x.



manner, or for what *end*—whether, for instance, in order to obtain some greater good, or to avoid some greater evil.

## V

## APPLICATION OF THE SECOND PRINCIPLE

1. For the solution of *some* objections, we must have recourse to the *Diction*. For example:

"On MULES and dogs the infection first began."<sup>1</sup>

POPE.

This may be defended by saying, that the Poet has, perhaps, used the word *oureas* in its FOREIGN acceptance of *sentinels*, not in its *proper* sense, of *mules*.

So also in the passage where it is said of Dolon—

- - - Of *form* unhappy.<sup>2</sup> - - -

The meaning is, not, that his *person* was *deformed*, but, that his *face* was *ugly*; for the Cretans use the word *eueidēs*—"well-FORMED"—to express a beautiful face.

Again: *sōroteron de keraire*<sup>3</sup> - - -

Here, the meaning is not, "mix it *strong*," as for intemperate drinkers; but, "mix it *quickly*."

2. The following passages may be defended by METAPHOR.

"Now pleasing sleep had seal'd each mortal eye;

Stretch'd in the tents the Grecian leaders lie;

The immortals *slumber'd* on their thrones above"<sup>4</sup> - - -

POPE.

Again—

"When on the Trojan plain his anxious eye

Watchful he *fix'd*"<sup>5</sup> - - -

And—

"The distant voice of flutes and pipes he mark'd  
With wonder, and the "*busy hum* of men."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Iliad i.

<sup>2</sup> Iliad x. The objection was probably that an ill-made man could not be a good racer.

<sup>3</sup> Iliad ix.

<sup>4</sup> Beginning of Iliad ii.

<sup>5</sup> Iliad x.

For, ALL,<sup>1</sup> is put *metaphorically* instead of *many*; *all* being a *species* of *many*.

Here also—

- - - "The Bear ALONE,  
Still shines exalted in th' ætherial plain,  
Nor bathes his flaming forehead in the main"<sup>2</sup>

POPE.

ALONE, is metaphorical: the most *remarkable* thing in any kind, we speak of as the *only* one.

We may have recourse also,

3. To ACCENT: as the following passage—Iliad ii, line 9. And this—Iliad xxiii, line 328<sup>3</sup>—were defended by *Hippias* of Thasos.

4. To PUNCTUATION; as in this passage of *Empedocles*:—

- - - things, before *immortal*,  
*Mortal* became, and *mix'd before unmix'd*.<sup>4</sup>  
[Their courses changed.]

<sup>1</sup> As the Greek word for ALL, does not occur in any of the preceding examples, we suppose some example, corresponding to this explanation, to have been lost.

<sup>2</sup> Iliad, xviii.

<sup>3</sup> Pope's transl.—"unperished with the rains." According to a different accentuation of the word *ou*, in the original, it would mean, "*where* perished with the rains."

<sup>4</sup> The verses allude to the two great physical principles of *Empedocles*, which he chose to denominate *friendship* and *strife*, and in which modern philosophers have discovered the Newtonian principles of *attraction* and *repulsion*. He held everything to be formed of the four elements, and resolved into them again. *Friendship* was the uniting, *strife*, the separating, principle. The elements themselves, in their *separate* and *simple* state, were *immortal*; the things *compounded* of them, were *mortal*; i.e. liable to be resolved into their first principles.—As far as we can make anything of this fragment, it seems intended to express the two *contrary* changes of things; from *immortal* to *mortal*, by the *uniting* principle, and from *mortal* to *immortal*, i.e. from *mixed* to *unmixed*, by the *disuniting* principle. But the words—"mixed before unmixed," will, plainly, express either of these changes, according as we place the comma, after *mixed*, or after *before*. It is imagined, that the critics mistook the punctuation

5. To AMBIGUITY; as in *Iliad* x, line 252, where the word *pleōn* is ambiguous.<sup>1</sup>

6. To CUSTOMARY SPEECH: thus, wine mixed with water, or whatever is *poured out* to drink *as* wine, is called *wine*: hence, *Ganymede* is said to "pour the WINE to Jove:"<sup>2</sup> though wine is not the liquor of the Gods. This, however, may also be defended by metaphor.

Thus, again, artificers in *iron* are called *braisiers*. Of this *kind* is the expression of the Poet—"greaves of tin."

7. When a word, in any passage, appears to express a *contradiction*, we must consider, in how many *different* SENSES it may there be taken. Here, for instance—

"There *stuck* the lance"<sup>3</sup>—POPE.

—the meaning is, was *stopped* only, or *repelled*.

Of *how many different senses* a word is capable, may best be discovered by considering the different senses that are *opposed* to it.

We may also say, with *Glauco*, that some critics, first take things for granted without foundation, and then argue from these previous decisions of their own; and, having once pronounced their judgment, condemn, as an *inconsistence*, whatever is contrary to their preconceived *opinion*. Of this kind is the cavil of the critics concerning *Icarius*.<sup>4</sup> Taking it for granted that he was a Lacedæmonian, they thence infer the absurdity of supposing *Telemachus* not to have seen him when he went to Lacedæmon.<sup>5</sup> But, perhaps, what the Cephælians say may be the truth. They assert, that the wife of *Ulysses* was of their country, and that the name of her father

so as to make *Empedocles* express only the same change in different words, and then censured this, as inconsistent with the expression, "*their courses changed*."

<sup>1</sup> *Iliad* x, line 252. The original says "*more than two parts of the night are past; the third part remains*."—This the cavilling critics censured as a sort of *bull*.

<sup>2</sup> *Iliad* xix, line 234.

<sup>3</sup> *Iliad* xx, line 321.

<sup>4</sup> Mentioned by Homer as the father of Penelope.

<sup>5</sup> See *Odyssey*, iv.

was not *Icarius*, but *Icadius*. The objection itself, therefore, is probably founded on a mistake.

## VI

## CENSURE OF IMPOSSIBILITY FARTHER CONSIDERED

The *Impossible*, in general, is to be justified by referring, either to the end of *Poetry* itself, or to what is *best*, or to *opinion*.

For, with respect to *Poetry*, impossibilities, rendered *probable*, are preferable to things *improbable*, though *possible*.<sup>1</sup>

With respect also to what is *best*, the imitations of Poetry should resemble the paintings of ZEUXIS:<sup>2</sup> the example should be more perfect than nature.

To *opinion*, or what is commonly *said to be*, may be referred even such things as are *improbable* and *absurd*; and it may also be said, that events of that kind are, sometimes, not really improbable; since "it is probable, that many things should happen contrary to probability."<sup>3</sup>

## VII

## INCONSISTENCE

When things are said, which appear to be *contradictory*, we must examine them as we do in logical confutation: whether the *same thing* be spoken of; whether in the *same respect*, and in the *same sense*. \* \* \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> See Part III, Chapter VI.

<sup>2</sup> "In ancient days, while *Greece* was flourishing in liberty and arts, a celebrated painter, [*Zeuxis*.] having drawn many excellent pictures for a certain free state, and been generously awarded for his labours, at last made an offer to paint them a *Helen*, as a *model* and *exemplar* of the most exquisite beauty. The proposal was readily accepted, when the artist informed them, that in order to draw *one* Fair, it was necessary he should contemplate *many*. He demanded therefore a sight of all their finest women. The state, to assist the work, assented to his request. They were exhibited before him; he selected the most beautiful; and from these formed his *Helen*, more beautiful than them all."—Harris's *Three Treatises*, p. 216.

<sup>3</sup> See Part II, Chapter XX, at the end.

## VIII

## IMPROBABILITY AND VITIOUS CHARACTER

*Improbability*, and *vitious manners*, when excused by no necessity, are just objects of critical censure. Such is the improbability in the *Aegæus*<sup>1</sup> of *Euripides*, and the vitious character of Menelaus in his *Orestes*.<sup>2</sup>

## RECAPITULATION

Thus, the sources from which the critics draw their *objections* are five: they object to things as *impossible*, or *improbable*, or of *immoral tendency*, or *contradictory*, or *contrary to technical accuracy*. The *answers*, which are *twelve* in number, may be deduced from what has been said.<sup>3</sup>

## PART V

OF THE SUPERIORITY OF TRAGIC TO EPIC  
POETRY

## I

## OBJECTION TO TRAGEDY

It may be inquired, farther, which of the two imitations the EPIC, or the TRAGIC, deserves the preference.

If that, which is the least *vulgar*, or *popular*, of the two, be the best, and that be such, which is calculated for the better sort of spectators—the imitation, which extends to every circumstance, must, evidently, be the most vulgar, or popular; for there, the imitators have recourse to every kind of motion and gesticulation, as if the audience, without the aid of action, were incapable of understanding them: like bad flute-players, who whirl themselves round, when they would imitate the motion of the Discus, and pull the Coryphæus, when *Scylla* is

<sup>1</sup> Of this Tragedy, some inconsiderable fragments only remain.

<sup>2</sup> See note in Part II, Chapter XV.

<sup>3</sup> As 1. Possible or 2. Impossible; 3. Probable or 4. Improbable; 5. Moral or 6. Immoral; 7. Consistent or 8. Contradictory; 9. Technical or 10. Irregular; 11. Ambiguous or 12. Clear.



the subject. Such is Tragedy. It may also be compared to what the modern *actors* are in the estimation of their predecessors; for *Myniscus* used to call *Callipides*, on account of his intemperate action, the *ape*: and *Tyndarus* was censured on the same account. What these performers are with respect to their predecessors, the Tragic imitation, when entire, is to the Epic. The latter, then, it is urged, addresses itself to hearers of the better sort, to whom the addition of gesture is superfluous: but Tragedy is for *the people*; and being, therefore, the most vulgar kind of imitation, is evidently the inferior.

## II

## THE OBJECTION ANSWERED

But now, in the *first* place, this censure falls, not upon the *Poet's* art, but upon that of the *actor*; for the gesticulation may be equally laboured in the recitation of an Epic Poem, as it was by *Sosistratus*; and in singing, as by *Mnasitheus*, the *Opuntian*.

Again—All gesticulation is not to be condemned; since even all *dancing* is not; but such only, as is unbecoming—such as was objected to *Callipides*, and is now objected to others, whose gestures resemble those of immodest women.<sup>1</sup>

Farther—Tragedy, as well as the Epic, is capable of producing its effect, even without action; we can judge of it perfectly by *reading*. If, then, in *other* respects, Tragedy be superior, it is sufficient that the fault here objected is not *essential* to it.

## III

## ADVANTAGES OF TRAGEDY

Tragedy has the *advantage* in the following respects.—It possesses all that is possessed by the Epic; it *might* even adopt its metre: and to this it makes no inconsiderable addition, in the Music and the Decoration; by the latter of which, the

<sup>1</sup> As no *actresses* were admitted on the Greek stage, their capital *actors* appeared in female parts, such as, *Electra*, *Iphigenia*, *Medea*, &c.

illusion is heightened, and the pleasure, arising from the action, is rendered more sensible and striking.

It has the advantage of greater clearness and distinctness of impression, as well *in reading*, as in representation.

It has also that, of attaining the end of its imitation in a shorter compass: for the effect is more pleasurable, when produced by a short and close series of impressions, than when weakened by diffusion through a long extent of time; as the *Oedipus* of SOPHOCLES, for example, would be, if it were drawn out to the length of the *Iliad*.

Farther: there is less *unity* in all Epic imitation; as appears from this—that any Epic Poem will furnish matter for *several* Tragedies. For, supposing the Poet to chuse a fable *strictly one*, the consequence must be, either, that his Poem, if proportionably contracted, will appear curtailed and defective, or, if extended to the usual length, will become weak, and, as it were, *diluted*. If, on the other hand, we suppose him to employ *several* fables—that is, a fable composed of *several actions*<sup>1</sup>—his imitation is no longer *strictly one*. The *Iliad*, for example, and the *Odyssey* contain many such subordinate parts, each of which has a certain magnitude, and unity, of its own: yet is the construction of those Poems as perfect, and as nearly approaching to the imitation of a single action, as possible.

#### IV

#### PREFERENCE OF TRAGEDY

If then TRAGEDY be superior to the EPIC in all these respects, and, also, in the peculiar *end* at which it aims,<sup>2</sup> (for each species ought to afford, not *any* sort of pleasure indis-

<sup>1</sup> Compare Part II, Chapter XX.—Aristotle is not here speaking of that unconnected, *historical* multiplicity of action, which he had before condemned, [Part III, Chapter I.] but of such as was *essential* to the nature of the Epic Poem. This is plain, from the *example*, which immediately follows; and, indeed, from the very drift of his argument.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. according to Aristotle's principles, to give that *pleasure*, which *arises from terror and pity, through imitation*. See Part II, Chapter XIII.

criminatingly, but such only as has been pointed out,) it evidently follows, that TRAGEDY, as it attains more effectually the end of the *art itself*, must deserve the preference.

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AND THUS MUCH concerning TRAGIC and EPIC Poetry in *general*, and their several *species*—the *number* and the *differences* of their *parts*—the causes of their *beauties* and their *defects*—the *censures* of critics, and the principles on which they are to be *answered*.

THE  
STOIC PHILOSOPHERS

HYMN TO ZEUS

BY CLEANTHES

AND THE

ENCHEIRIDION OF EPICTETUS

BY ARRIAN

*BOTH TRANSLATED BY*

T. W. ROLLESTON

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*WITH AN INTRODUCTION UPON*

THE PHILOSOPHERS AFTER PLATO  
AND ARISTOTLE





## INTRODUCTION

### THE PHILOSOPHERS AFTER PLATO AND ARISTOTLE

THE schools established by Plato and Aristotle never rose above the philosophical heights reached by their founders. SPEUSIPPUS, the nephew of Plato, a man of ability and prudence but little originality, succeeded to the presidency of the Academy, and developed the doctrines of the great philosopher along the lines laid down by him. He wrote several works, all of which are lost. HERACLIDES PONTICUS, born at Heraclea in Pontus, about 380 B.C., a disciple of both Plato and Aristotle, wrote some sixty works on a variety of subjects, all but a few fragments of which have perished. He was a learned man, but deficient in analytical power. It was through XENOCRATES of Chalcedon (born B. C. 400), his dullest but most diligent scholar, that the character of the Academy was most worthily upheld. Plato took great pains in cultivating his naturally heavy mind. In comparing him with his brightest pupil, Aristotle, he was wont to say that Xenocrates was a dull ass who needed the spur, and Aristotle a spirited horse who required the curb, and he frequently advised Xenocrates to sacrifice to the Graces in order to acquire a better style of expression. For this guidance Xenocrates was deeply grateful and persisted in his studies till he overcame his defects. In later years he characterized himself as a vessel with a narrow mouth, that receives slowly, but firmly retains its contents. So attached was he to his master that when Dionysius in a fit of anger threatened to cut off Plato's head, he pointed to his own and said, "Not before he has cut off this." When Speusippus gave up the presidency of the Academy, Xenocrates was chosen to succeed him, much to the chagrin of Aristotle who had returned from Macedonia expecting election to the place. Aristotle immediately established a school in the Lyceum in opposition to the Academy, of

which Xenocrates remained the honored and esteemed president until his death, which occurred B. C. 316, through and accidentally falling, in the dark, into a cistern of water.

Xenocrates was noted for his integrity. Judges took his simple affirmation without the ceremony of an oath. When he was sent with others on an embassy to Philip of Macedon, he declined all private intercourse with the king, that he might not be required to refuse a bribe. Philip said that he was the only ambassador in his experience whose friendship he had not been able to purchase. Sent as an ambassador to Antipater to secure the release of Athenian captives, Xenocrates refused the invitation of that wily prince to a banquet in the words of Odysseus to Circe, the beguiling enchantress, whereat Antipater was so charmed that he at once released the captives. His moderation, as well as his generosity to a rival, were shown when Alexander the Great, desiring in a moment of pique to mortify his old teacher, Aristotle, sent Xenocrates, as president of the Academy, a gift of fifty talents (about \$60,000). Xenocrates retained but thirty minæ of the amount (about \$500), and returned the rest saying that the original sum was far more than he could spend in a lifetime. His chastity was a proverb, so much so that Laïs, a celebrated courtesan was piqued to attempt to seduce him, in which she failed to her confusion. From an intellectual as well as moral point of view he was the ideal type of college president. He insisted on his pupils being thoroughly grounded in the exact sciences before they took up speculative philosophy. Geometry and astronomy he called the "handles of philosophy." He taught the doctrines of Plato in the mystic language of Pythagoras, making Unity and Diversity principles of nature, or gods—the former the father, the latter the mother, of the universe. He believed the stars were gods, and that midway between them and men were demi-gods with human characteristics. In this way he reconciled the anthropomorphic theogony of Homer and Hesiod with the pure theism of the philosophers.

Xenocrates was succeeded in the presidency of the Academy by POLEMO OF ATHENS. He had been a wealthy young debauchee; one day, when he was about thirty, bursting into the

school of Xenocrates at the head of about thirty revelling companions, his attention was so arrested by the discourse, which happened to be on temperance, that he tore off his garland of Dionysius, and remained an attentive listener, from that day becoming a moral, abstemious man, and a disciple of Xenocrates. He died B.C. 273 at a great age. He continued the policy of his predecessor in laying emphasis on moral action, rather than philosophical speculation, and considered the highest good to consist in living according to the laws of nature.

It was CRANTOR, a pupil of Xenocrates, who wrote the first commentaries on the works of Plato. Like that of his master, his high moral character became proverbial among the ancients. From one of his treatises, *Of Grief*, Cicero drew largely in writing the third of his *Tusculan Disputations*, and the lost treatise *Of Consolation* on the death of his daughter Tullia.

ARCESILAUS OF PITANE, in *Æolis* (born B.C. 316), attended the instructions of Theophrastus, Crantor, Polemon, Diodorus of Caria, Pyrrho, and MENEDEMUS (the founder of the Eretrian School, a philosophy derived from the Megaric, but of whose tenets nothing is known), and from their teachings formed a new system since called the Middle Academy. He followed in the succession of the presidents of the Academy founded by Plato, and believed that he was correctly interpreting the doctrines of the founder. He taught in a modified form of the Socratic dialogue, and wrote nothing. We therefore know little of his beliefs save through his opponents, of whom Chrysippus, the Stoic, was the chief. It appears that he denied the certainty not only of intellectual, but also of sensuous knowledge.

The succession of the Middle Academy, which at an indeterminate place merges into the New, when the more obnoxious tenets of Arcesilaus were abandoned, is as follows: ARCESILAUS, LACYDES, EVANDER, HEGESINUS, CARNEADES, CLITOMACHUS, and PHILO.

CARNEADES was the first of these who possessed real talent, and he can safely be called a representative of the New or regenerated Academy. Athens sent him with other philosophers as ambassador to Rome in B. C. 155. He held forth upon Greek philosophy with such eloquence that the stern Cato,

fearing that the Roman youth would abandon their military ideals for intellectual, packed the philosophers back home as quickly as he could. While Carneades held to the fallibility of the senses, nevertheless he allowed that probable appearances are a sufficient guide on which to base our actions.

CLITOMACHUS, the pupil and successor of Carneades, was a native of Carthage drawn to Athens by love of learning. He wrote four hundred books on philosophical subjects. At an advanced age he was seized with a lethargy. In an interval of recovery he said, "The love of life shall deceive me no longer" and laid violent hands on himself. He followed the tenets of Carneades, laying special stress on suspension of judgment upon reports received through the senses. He was an enemy of forensic rhetoric, and thought society should suppress so dangerous an art.

PHILO OF LARISSA, the last of the succession, fled to Rome on the approach of the siege of Athens in the Mithridatic War. He was a persuasive orator. Cicero, hearing him, threw aside his inclinations toward Epicureanism, and accepted the doctrines of the New Academy. Thereafter his philosophy looked to the probability rather than the certainty of truth. It was from Philo that Cicero gained his account of the New Academy.

This Philo must not be confounded with PHILO THE JEW of Alexandria. This philosopher was born B. C. 25, of a priestly family. He was a student of Plato, and, in a style modelled upon the Athenian philosophers, wrote a number of Greek works reconciling the Platonic philosophy with the theology of the Hebrew Scriptures. He developed the Doctrine of the *Logos* (Word), to explain the mediation between the Deity and man; this Logos St. John, in the first chapter of his gospel, identified with Jesus. His works are extant. They are marked by great vigor of thought and moral earnestness. As they pertain more to Hebraic philosophy than to Greek, they are not reproduced in the present work.

During the Christian era, there were two notable Platonic philosophers. MAXIMUS TYRIUS, a native of Tyre, flourished in the reigns of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus and Commodus. He is the author of forty-one extant dissertations on philosophi-



cal subjects, written in a pleasing style. He was also a poet and rhetorician. CELSUS (who is not to be confounded with the physician) was a Platonic (some say Epicurean) philosopher, living about A.D. 180. He was a bitter opponent of Christianity, causing himself to be initiated into the secret society, said to have been founded by St. Clement of Rome, in order to discover the Christian mysteries. He wrote a work based upon his discoveries which he entitled *A True Discourse*, and in which he depicted Christianity as a ridiculous system, and its followers as dangerous fanatics who ought to be suppressed by the state. The work is lost, but its argument and copious extracts from it are preserved in the answer made to it by Origen, the Christian philosopher. Celus also wrote a book against magicians, which, too, is lost. Lucian, the Skeptic, who was also an opponent of Christianity, was the friend of Celsus and praises his wisdom, amiability, and love of truth.

The development of the Platonic philosophy known as Neo-Platonism, which arose in the Christian era, is discussed in a following introduction. (See page 335.)

Aristotle named as his successor in the presidency of the Lyceum, THEOPHRASTUS, his favorite pupil, bequeathing to him his library and the originals of his writings. Theophrastus was a native of Eresus in Lesbos. He had studied under Plato as well as Aristotle, and was worthy of both masters. Under his guidance the Lyceum flourished greatly, having over two thousand students, among them men of the rank of the comic poet Menander. He rivalled Xenocrates in the estimation of the Athenians, as was shown when he was impeached of impiety, for he was not alone acquitted, but his accuser would have suffered the vengeance of the people had he not interfered to save him. He presided for thirty-five years over the Lyceum until his death at an advanced age, B. C. 287. He is said to have complained on his death bed of the short duration of life, saying that he was just acquiring an inkling of the meaning of philosophy. He wrote many works, chiefly on the development of the Aristotelian philosophy.

The history of the preservation of the writings of Aristotle, if indeed it be history, is most romantic. After the death of



Theophrastus, they are said to have passed into the hands of his pupil NELEUS, of Scepsis, in the Troad. The heirs of Neleus, to protect them against the royal bibliophiles, the Attalids of Pergamos, hid them in a vault, where they were damaged by dampness and vermin. Here they were discovered about 100 B.C. by APELLICON, a rich book-lover and something of a philosopher, who edited them very badly and republished them. The original manuscripts were then conveyed to Athens, whence, upon the capture of the city by Sulla, they were taken to Rome where the grammarian Tyrranion had access to them. From him copies were obtained by ANDRONICUS OF RHODES, who arranged the works and published them about 80 B.C.

STRATO, the tutor of Ptolemy Philadelphus, succeeded Theophrastus as head of the Lyceum in B.C. 288. He devoted himself to natural science, whence he received the cognomen of Physicus. He was succeeded in 272 B.C. by LYCON.

NICHOMACHUS, the son of Aristotle by a slave girl, and after whom the philosopher named his Nichomochean Ethics, was also a philosopher, writing several works, none of which have been preserved.

Among the pupils of Aristotle may be mentioned the following: DICHÆARCHUS, a Sicilian, wrote several dialogues, now lost, in which he argued against the existence of the soul. He was more famous as a geographer and statistician than as a philosopher. His maps, and his geographical writings (which were in verse), were extant in the time of Cicero, who praised them highly. EUDEMUS, of Rhodes, made a recension of all of Aristotle's ethical lectures, in seven books. PHANIAS, of Lesbos, a countryman and friend of Theophrastus, was a prolific writer on philosophy and physics.

The Peripatetic school founded by Aristotle terminated with DIODORUS OF TYRE, a pupil of CRITOLAUS. Diodorus was an advocate of the simple life, believing the highest good was to live free from toil and care. There were many other so-called Peripatetic philosophers of little importance, except in their own and their followers' eyes. Of this class PHORMION was a type. He was of Ephesus. When Hannibal in his exile came to that city, Phormion discoursed for several hours to him upon military art. When the admiring listeners asked

Hannibal his opinion of the philosopher he replied: "Matchless! Of all the old fools I have met, none can equal Phormion."

The successors of Socrates through Euclid of Megara deserve mention.

DIDORUS OF CARIA was the chief of these philosophers, having developed the distinguishing characteristic of the Megaric school, paradoxes, or speculative sophisms, to the extreme. He received the sobriquet of Chronus (Time), from Ptolemy Soter, for having asked in the presence of the emperor for "time to answer" a question propounded to him by STILPO, a fellow philosopher. Mortified at this ridicule, he wrote a book on the question, but nevertheless died of vexation. He is reputed to be the author of the famous sophism: "If any body be moved, it is moved either in the place where it is or in a place where it is not; now nothing can act or suffer where it is not, therefore there is no such thing as motion." Diodorus met a fit punishment for this philosophical crime, for, having dislocated his shoulder, he went to a surgeon who kept him for some time in torture while he proved by the philosopher's own logic that the bone could not have moved out of its place.

Kindred to his philosophy was that of the Skeptical school. This was founded by PYRRHO, a native of Elis, who, deriving the basis of his belief, or lack of belief, from Democritus, doubted the existence of everything, even his own doubts. He lived in accordance with his theories, retired from the world and careless of outward conditions. His disciple Timon praised his master's supreme repose of soul and indifference to pleasure or pain.

Pyrrho was greatly revered by his fellow citizens, who made him high priest, and erected a monument to him after death. His philosophical system was reduced to writing by his disciple, TIMON, called the SILLOGIST, from his satires (*silli*). He modified his master's philosophy into a sane agnosticism, or system of suspended judgment upon philosophic problems. His satires were directed against the philosophers of all the schools, the revered dead as well as his contemporaries. They were

greatly admired by the ancients; unfortunately none has survived.

The successors of Socrates through Antisthenes, the Cynic, have been discussed in a previous article, Socrates and his Disciples [page 86].

In addition to these schools growing out of the teaching of Socrates,, two great systems of philosophic thought and moral action arose, largely dividing the Greek world between them. These were Stoicism and Epicureanism.

Stoicism was founded at Athens about 310 B.C. by ZENO OF CITIUM in Cyprus. His father was a merchant, who, noticing his son's early bent toward learning, purchased for him on a trip to Athens the writings of the greatest Socratic philosophers. These Zeno studied with great avidity, and, at the age of thirty, went to Athens to pursue further philosophical research. Stopping at a bookseller's he asked him where he could meet some of the great philosophers. Crates, the Cynic, happened then to be passing, and the bookseller said, "Follow him." Zeno did so, and became one of Crates's disciples. But Cynicism did not altogether satisfy him, and he went to other schools, especially that of Stilpo, the Megarian. Crates, indignant at the desertion, hunted Zeno up, and, finding him with Stilpo, attempted to drag him out of the school, whereupon Zeno said: "You may seize my body, but Stilpo has laid hold on my mind." Zeno then attended the lectures of Xenocrates and Diodorus of Caria, learning dialectics from the latter. Finally he went to Polemo, who, perceiving Zeno's plan of going from one school to another to collect materials for a new system of his own, said: "I am no stranger to your Phœnician arts, Zeno; I perceive that you design to creep slyly into my garden and steal away my fruit." Zeno thereupon came into the open and established his school. He chose for his place of instruction a public portico ornamented with fine paintings, and hence called *Poikilē Stoa*, the Painted Porch. From this Zeno and his disciples received the name of Stoics.

Zeno's philosophy became very popular, since it suited the eclecticism of the Athenian mind. Its practical morality was that of Cynicism, without its extravagances and eccentricities.

On its speculative side it returned to Realism, the common sense view of the existence of the outside world: that all knowledge originated in real impressions upon the mind (which is at birth a blank page) of real objects without. These presentations, when confirmed by subsequent experience, are syllogistically, that is, logically, developed by the reason into general concepts of the nature of the universe and of man—in other words, physical, psychological and moral laws. The test of their truth was their appeal to the intellectual and moral senses of the perceiver. In the material world Zeno recognized two principles, matter, and force, or the divine spirit permeating, shaping and directing matter. These two principles, however, were manifestations of the same thing. The universe was bound together by the law of causation, there being no independent entities. Human action was related to the law of nature, the will of man with the divine will, by Virtue, which was the chief end of life. And Virtue was based on Wisdom, acquiring which should therefore be the chief occupation of man. This philosophy was naturally attacked by rival schools, first, by the Academicians, and later by Epicurus.

Zeno's dialectic method was similar to that of his master in the subject, Diodorus of Caria. He invented a number of *paradoxes*, of which that of Achilles and the Tortoise is the most celebrated. It is as follows: If Achilles, the swift runner, should give a tortoise the start in a race, will he be able to overtake him? He will not; for, when Achilles has gone half the intervening distance, the tortoise is half the original distance in front of him, with an increment of the distance it has traversed in the meantime; and when Achilles has gone half of this distance, the tortoise is still ahead an equal space, plus a second increment; and so it will be to infinity, a space remaining between the two.

Zeno numbered among his pupils the great men of Athens. Antigonus Gonatas, king of Macedon, when residing in the city, attended his lectures, and invited him to return with him to his court. Zeno was so esteemed by the Athenians for integrity that they gave into his hands the keys of the citadel, and honored him with the gift of a golden crown, and the erection of his statue in bronze.



While abstemious in his living like the Cynics, Zeno was, unlike them, not ostentatiously so, and neat and clean in his attire and habits. He lived to the extreme age of ninety-eight, when (B.C. 264) he put an end to his life, believing that a fall which he had in leaving his school and in which he broke one of his fingers, was a divine summons to the other world. "I am coming; why do you call me?" he said, and, proceeding to his home, strangled himself.

The writings of Zeno have all been lost. They treated of the State, and of Life according to Nature. His doctrines must be sought for among the works of his disciples.

The greatest of Zeno's pupils was CLEANTHES, a native of Assos in Asia Minor. He was originally a boxer. Going to Athens, he fell under the influence of Zeno, and attended his school, supporting himself by carrying water at night. In B.C. 263 he succeeded Zeno as head of the Stoic school. He died in his eighty-first year by voluntary starvation. The only one of his writings which has come down to us is his noble Hymn to Zeus, which, says Professor Mahaffy, "would alone redeem the Hellenistic age from the charge of mere pedantry." It is probably one of the poems to which St. Paul referred in his speech on Mars Hill in Athens when he said, "As certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his [God's] offspring." The other poet referred to was probably Aratus. The Hymn is given in the following pages in the translation of T. W. Rolleston.

HERILLUS, a native of Carthage, was a pupil of Zeno, who carried the Stoic philosophy to the western world. His doctrine that the chief good is knowledge was attacked by Cicero.

SPHÆRUS, a pupil of both Zeno and Cleanthes, carried the Stoic philosophy to Sparta, where he shaped the character of the young prince who, later, as Cleomenes III, instituted reforms in government, and died for the cause of the people. Sphærus then went to Alexandria, where he lived during the reigns of the first two Ptolemies. He wrote several works, all of which are lost.

CHRYSIPPUS of SOLI, a disciple of Cleanthes, was the most voluminous author of antiquity, seldom allowing a day to pass without writing five hundred lines. He wrote in all seven hun-



dred volumes, of which three hundred were on logical subjects. Only a few fragments of his works remain, being extracts gathered from Latin authors. Naturally he borrowed largely from others. He maintained that reason was the bond of the universe. He speaks of God as Necessity, or Fate. He was fond of subtleties in reasoning; even as a pupil, he was so vain of his ability as a dialectician that he said to his master, Cleanthes: "Give me doctrines, and I will find arguments to support them." Later, when he became a teacher himself, on a man inquiring of him who would be the best instructor for his son, he replied: "Me; for if I thought any philosopher excelled me, I would become his pupil." His pride was so great that he refused to follow the general custom among philosophers of dedicating his works to princes. This arrogance created him many enemies, not only among the Academic and Epicurean sects, but among his fellow Stoics. In particular Carneades of the Academy opposed him in argument, convicting him of inconsistency.

PANÆTIUS, of Rhodes (born B.C. 180), was the most important representative of Stoicism in the next century. Receiving his education at Athens, he journeyed to Rome, and set up his school there about B.C. 156. He was patronized by the younger Scipio and Lælius, and gained many followers among the nobility by passing over the subtleties of the Stoic philosophy, and softening the asperity of its moral code, representing the system in a refined and polished form. After Scipio's death (in 129 B.C.) Panætius returned to Athens and became head of the Stoic school, a position which he held until his death in 111 B.C. His works are lost. The most important of them, a Treatise on Duty, was taken by Cicero as the basis of his *Offices*.

POSIDONIUS OF SYRIA, a Stoic philosopher, taught at Rhodes with such great success that Pompey, returning to Rome at the close of the Mithridatic War stopped at Rhodes to attend his lectures. The great Roman general came in state to the door of the school, and paid homage to the philosopher by lowering the fasces. Posidonius was also an historian, a natural scientist and an astronomer. He wrote a supplement (now lost) to the history of Polybius, which was one of Plutarch's

sources, and he constructed a *planetarium* to represent the motions of the heavenly bodies.

ATHENODORUS OF TARSUS taught at Apollonia in Epirus, where Octavius (afterward the emperor Augustus) was one of his pupils. He accompanied Octavius to Rome, where he remained as one of the prince's friends, giving him such excellent advice as "when angry, stop short and repeat the letters of the Greek alphabet."

DIODOTUS was another Stoic philosopher teaching at Rome. He was the teacher of Cicero, at whose house he died B.C. 59.

It was Epictetus, however, who was the great apostle of the Stoic philosophy to the Latin world. A Phrygian slave, he was brought to Rome about A.D. 50, and sold to Epaphroditus, a freedman of Nero, who had been one of the emperor's bodyguard. Although he had tasted the miseries of servitude himself, Epaphroditus was a fiendishly cruel master, wantonly torturing Epictetus. Once, while he was twisting Epictetus's leg, the slave, already a Stoic in the control of his feelings, quietly remonstrated: "You will break it." His master continued twisting, and the leg broke, whereupon Epictetus remarked, "Did I not tell you so?" In some way, which we do not know, Epictetus gained his freedom, and became recognized as a philosopher; for, upon the emperor Domitian issuing an edict against philosophers (A.D. 89), we hear of Epictetus retiring to Nicopolis in Epirus. Afterward he returned to Rome and lived on terms of intimacy with the emperor Hadrian. He died about the time of the accession of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus to the throne.

The life of Epictetus was beautiful in its simplicity; his character noble in its tenderness. He lived for a while in a hut with no other furniture than bed and earthen lamp, and without a companion, until he adopted an abandoned child. His lessons were all designed to inculcate practical morality. His motto was, "Bear and forbear." His contemporaries held him in the highest esteem. As an inspiring lecturer he was regarded as without an equal; his style was thought superior to Plato's. When he died, his relics were cherished by his disciples, one of them paying 3,000 drachmas or \$500, for his lamp, which the master had chanced to refer to in his lectures

as an illustration of cheapness combined with utility. Epicetetus left no writings. His pupil ARRIAN recorded his discourses, publishing them after his death in eight volumes, four of which remain. From these discourses Arrian compiled the *Encheiridion*, or *Manual of the Teachings of Epicetetus*. It is this work which is presented in the following pages, in the translation of T. W. Rolleston.

Stoicism finally succumbed to the spirit of Christianity, affecting the new religion, however, on the side of morality and asceticism. EUPHRATES OF ALEXANDRIA, who flourished in the Second Century A.D., may be mentioned as a surviving Stoic of the old school. Pliny the younger speaks of him as a man of noble character. He was the friend of the emperors Vespasian and Hadrian; when worn out by disease and old age, he ended his life by drinking hemlock, having asked and obtained permission of Hadrian to do so.

In the same year (310 B.C.) that Zeno began his lectures in the Painted Porch of Athens, EPICURUS OF SAMOS (B.C. 341-270), established a school at Mitylene, in which he taught the philosophy which, called Epicureanism after his name, was destined for centuries to come to oppose the system of the "subtle Phœnician" eclectic.

Epicurus, who was the son of a schoolmaster, is said to have become interested in philosophy at the age of fourteen, through desiring an explanation of chaos, as described by Hesiod, which his father and teachers were unable to explain.

In this study he was aided by PAMPHILUS, who had been a disciple of Plato. Probably inspired by this man, Epicurus, at the age of eighteen, went to Athens, but, owing to the troubled political condition of the city, did not remain long, going to Colophon, where he was joined by his father. In B.C. 310 he returned to Samos and set up his first school at Mitylene. Staying only a year, he went to Lampsacus, where he taught for four years. Encouraged by success, he boldly went to Athens and, buying a garden for eighty minæ (about \$1,500), he set up therein a school, called the Epicurean Gardens. Here he taught for thirty-six years until

his death (from stone in the bladder) in his seventy-second year.

From the beginning the school was exceedingly popular. Pupils came from all parts of the world, and lived in the Gardens with the master and each other on terms of delightful friendship. The stern and jealous Stoics represented that the place was an abode of sensuality and licentiousness, and that Epicurus so surfeited himself at the feasts held therein, that he vomited twice a day. From the fact that LEONTIUM, the wife of METRODORUS, the most eminent friend and disciple of Epicurus, had been a courtesan, and attended the discourses of the philosopher (she afterwards wrote several philosophical treatises), the report was spread that harlots mingled with the students in the lectures.

The reverse was the truth. The fare provided in the Gardens was, as stated in a sign over the gate, barley-cakes and water, and Epicurus had so little inclination for women's companionship that he remained unmarried, devoting himself to philosophy.

Besides Metrodorus (who wrote several books in defense of his master's teachings), the chief disciples of Epicurus were HERMACHUS, of Mitylene, whom he appointed his successor, and POLYÆNUS. The three brothers of Epicurus, NEOCLES, CHÆREDEMUS, and ARISTOBULUS, were also his followers, together with his servant MYS, whom at his death he made free.

Epicurus took his physical philosophy from Democritus, making few, and these unimportant changes. (See account of the philosophy of Democritus on page 73.) Accordingly, like the Laughing Philosopher, Epicurus was a materialist. In ethics he was a hedonist, declaring that pleasure (which he used in its broad meaning, covering intellectual as well as sensuous delight) was the highest good of existence. Death, he said, was not to be feared, for "where we are, death is not; and where death is, we are not."

Epicurus was naturally accused of atheism. This he denied, saying that the existence of the gods was proved by the prevalence of belief in them. He believed, however, that they had no part in the affairs of men, living careless and free in the distant heavens, and that they were to be worshipped as



a tribute to their perfection, and not to secure their favor or avert their enmity.

The doctrines of Epicurus were carried down in unmodified form after Hermachus, by POLYSTRATUS, and a succession of other philosophers of whom little is known. PILEDRUS (not the fabulist) was head of the Epicurean school at Athens when Cicero was a student there (B.C. 80). He wrote a treatise on the gods, a fragment of which was found at Herculaneum in 1806. Cicero did not approve of Epicureanism, nor did other Romans of similar moral temperament. Nevertheless the philosophy made headway at Rome, winning its chief converts among the poets, such as Lucretius, who became its chief Latin exponent, and Horace. Later, its most noted Latin disciple was Pliny the Younger, and its leading Greek representative LUCIAN, the satirist.

In the First Century A.D. the doctrines of Pythagoras were revived by a sect of mystics called the Neo-Pythagoreans. Of these the most famous was APOLLONIUS OF TYANA, in Capadocia. He pretended to work miracles, with the result that many persons worshipped him as divine, setting him up as a rival of Jesus of Nazareth. According to his biographer, PHILOSTRATUS THE ELDER (a Sophist of Lemnos, who flourished in the Third Century, A.D.), Apollonius in his twentieth year distributed his patrimony among the poor and set out to roam the world, going even to India and to the sources of the Nile. Twice he lived at Rome, first under Nero, until the expulsion of the philosophers, and again under Domitian, against whom he was charged with conspiring. Escaping from the city during the trial, he returned to the East, continuing his life as a wandering moralist and healer. He lived to a great age, and died the master of a school in Ephesus. Eighty-five of his alleged epistles survive.



# HYMN TO ZEUS

BY CLEANTHES

Most glorious of the Immortals, many named, Almighty for ever.

Zeus, ruler of Nature, that governest all things with law,  
Hail! for lawful it is that all mortals should address Thee.

For we are Thy offspring, taking the image only of Thy voice,  
as many mortal things as live and move upon the earth.

Therefore, will I hymn Thee, and sing Thy might forever.

For Thee doth all this universe that circles round the earth  
obey, moving whithersoever Thou leadest, and is gladly  
swayed by Thee,

Such a minister hast Thou in Thine invincible hands;—the  
two-edged, blazing, imperishable thunderbolt.

For under its stroke all Nature shuddereth, and by it thou  
guidest aright the Universal Reason, that roams through  
all things, mingling itself with the greater and the lesser  
lights, till it have grown so great, and become supreme  
king over all.

Nor is aught done on the earth without Thee, O God, nor in  
the divine sphere of the heavens, nor in the sea,

Save the works that evil men do in their folly—

Yea, but Thou knowest even to find a place for superfluous  
things, and to order that which is disorderly, and things  
not dear to men are dear to Thee.

Thus dost Thou harmonise into One all good and evil things,  
that there should be one everlasting Reason of them all.

And this the evil among mortal men avoid and heed not;  
wretched, ever desiring to possess the good, yet they nor  
see nor hear the universal Law of God, which obeying  
with all their heart, their life would be well.

But they rush graceless each to his own aim,

Some cherishing lust for fame, the nurse of evil strife,

Some bent on monstrous gain,

Some turned to folly and the sweet works of the flesh,  
Hastening, indeed, to bring the very contrary of these things  
to pass.

But Thou, O Zeus, the All-giver, Dweller in the darkness of  
cloud, Lord of thunder, save Thou men from their un-  
happy folly,

Which do Thou, O Father, scatter from their souls; and give  
them to discover the wisdom, in whose assurance Thou  
governest all things with justice;

So that being honoured, they may pay Thee honour,  
Hymning Thy works continually, as it beseems a mortal man.  
Since there can be no greater glory for men or Gods than this,  
Duly to praise for ever the Universal Law.

# THE ENCHEIRIDION OF EPICTETUS

BY ARRIAN

OF things that exist, some are in our own power, some are not in our own power. Of things that are in our own power are our opinions, impulses, pursuits, avoidances, and, in brief, all that is of our own doing. Of things that are not in our own power are the body, possessions, reputation, authority, and, in brief, all that is not of our own doing. And the things that are in our own power are in their nature free, not liable to hindrance or embarrassment, while the things that are not in our own power are strengthless, servile, subject, alien.

Remember, then, if you hold things by their nature subject to be free, and things alien to be your proper concern, you will be hampered, you will lament, you will be troubled, you will blame Gods and men. But if you hold that only to be your own which is so, and the alien for what it is, alien, then none shall ever compel you, none shall hinder you, you will blame no one, accuse no one, you will not do the least thing unwillingly, none shall harm you, you shall have no foe, for you shall suffer no injury.

Aiming, then, at things so high, remember that it is no moderate passion wherewith you must attempt them, but some things you must utterly renounce, and put some, for the present, aside. For if, let us say, you aim also at this, to rule and to gather riches, then you are like, through aiming at the chief things also, to miss these lower ends; and shall most assuredly miss those others, through which alone freedom and happiness are won. Straightway, then, practise saying to every harsh appearance—*Thou art an Appearance and not at all the thing thou appearest to be*. Then examine it, and prove it by the rules you have, but first and above all by this, whether it concern something that is in our own power, or something that is not in our own power. And if the latter, then be the thought at hand: *It is nothing to Me*

Remember that pursuit declares the aim of attaining the thing pursued, and avoidance that of not falling into the thing shunned; and he who fails in his pursuit is unfortunate, and it is misfortune to fall into what he would avoid. If now you shun only those things in your power which are contrary to Nature, you shall never fall into what you would avoid. But if you shun disease or death or poverty, you shall have misfortune.

Turn away, then, your avoidance from things not in our power, and set it upon things contrary to Nature which are in our power. And let pursuit for the present be utterly effaced; for if you are pursuing something that is not in our power, it must needs be that you miscarry, and of things that are, as many as you may rightly aim at, none are yet open to you. But use only desire and aversion, and that indeed lightly, and with reserve, and indifferently.

Each thing that allures the mind, or offers an advantage, or is loved by you, remember to speak of it as it is, from the smallest things upward. If you love an earthen jar, then think, *I love an earthen jar*, for so shall you not be troubled when it breaks. And when you kiss your little child, or wife, think, *I kiss a mortal*; and so shall you not be troubled when they die.

When you are about to take in hand some action, bethink you what it is that you are about to do. If you go to the bath, represent to yourself all that takes place there—the squirting of water, the slapping, the scolding, the pilfering; and then shall you take the matter in hand more safely, saying straightway: *I desire to be bathed, and maintain my purpose according to Nature*. And even so with each and every action. For thus, if aught should occur to cross you in your bathing, this thought shall be straightway at hand: *But not this alone did I desire; but also to maintain my purpose according to Nature. And I shall not maintain it if I have indignation at what happens here*.

It is not things, but the opinions about the things, that trouble mankind. Thus Death is nothing terrible; if it were so, it would have appeared so to Socrates. But the opinion we have about Death, that it is terrible, *that* is wherein the terror

lieth. When, therefore, we are hindered or troubled or grieved, never let us blame any other than ourselves; that is to say, our opinions. A man undisciplined in philosophy blames others in matters in which he fares ill; one who begins to be disciplined blames himself, one who is disciplined, neither others nor himself.

Be not elated in mind at any superiority that is not of yourself. If your horse were elated and should say, *I am beautiful*, that would be tolerable. But when you are elated and say, *I have a beautiful horse*, know that it is at an excellence in your horse that you are elated. What, then, is your own? This—to make use of the appearances. So that when you deal according to Nature in the use of appearances, then shall you be elated, for you will then be elated at an excellence that is your own.

Even as in a sea voyage, when the ship is brought to anchor, and you go out to fetch in water, you make a by-work of gathering a few roots and shells by the way, but have need ever to keep your mind fixed on the ship, and constantly to look round, lest at any time the master of the ship call, and you must, if he call, cast away all those things, lest you be treated like the sheep that are bound and thrown into the hold: So it is with human life also. And if there be given wife and children instead of shells and roots, nothing shall hinder us to take them. But if the master call, run to the ship, forsaking all those things, and looking not behind. And if thou be in old age, go not far from the ship at any time, lest the master should call, and thou be not ready.

Seek not to have things happen as you choose them, but rather choose them to happen as they do, and so shall you live prosperously.

Disease is a hindrance of the body, not of the Will, unless the Will itself consent. Lameness is a hindrance of the leg, not of the Will. And this you may say on every occasion, for nothing can happen to you but you will find it a hindrance not of yourself but of some other thing.

Remember at anything that shall befall thee to turn to thyself and seek what faculty thou hast for making use of it. If thou see a beautiful person, thou wilt find a faculty for



that—namely, self-mastery. If toil is laid upon thee, thou wilt find the faculty of Perseverance. If thou art reviled, thou wilt find Patience. And making this thy wont, thou shalt not be carried away by the appearances.

Never in any case say, *I have lost* such a thing, but *I have returned it*. Is thy child dead? it is a return. Is thy wife dead? it is a return. Art thou deprived of thy estate? is not this also a return?

——“But he is wicked who deprives me of it!”

But what is that to thee, through whom the Giver demands his own? As long, therefore, as he grants it to thee, steward it like another's property, as travellers use an inn.

If you would advance in philosophy you must abandon such thoughts as, *If I neglect my affairs I shall not have the means of living. If I do not correct my servant he will be good for nothing*. For it is better to die of hunger, having lived without grief and fear, than to live with a troubled spirit amid abundance. And it is better to have a bad servant than an afflicted mind.

Make a beginning, then, in small matters. Is a little of your oil spilt, or a little wine stolen? Then say to yourself, *For so much peace is bought, this is the price of tranquillity*. For nothing can be gained without paying for it. And when you call your servant, bethink you that he may not hear, or, hearing, may not obey. For him, indeed, that is not well, but for you it is altogether well that he have not the power to trouble your mind.

If thou wouldst advance, be content to let people think thee senseless and foolish as regards external things. Wish not ever to seem wise, and if ever thou shalt find thyself accounted to be somebody, then mistrust thyself. For know that it is not easy to make a choice that shall agree both with outward things and with Nature, but it must needs be that he who is careful of the one shall neglect the other.

Thou art a fool if thou desire wife and children and friends to live forever, for that is desiring things to be in thy power which are not in thy power, and things pertaining to others to be thine own. So also thou art a fool to desire that thy servant should never do anything amiss, for that is de-

siring evil not to be evil, but something else. But if thou desire never to fail in any pursuit, this thou canst do. This, therefore, practice to attain—namely, the attainable.

The lord of each of us is he that hath power over the things that we desire or dislike, to give or to take them away. Who-soever, then, will be free, let him neither desire nor shun any of the things that are in others' power; otherwise he must needs be enslaved.

Think that thou shouldst conduct thyself in life as at a feast. Is some dish brought to thee? Then put forth thy hand and help thyself in seemly fashion. Doth it pass thee by? Then hold it not back. Hath it not yet come? Then do not reach out for it at a distance, but wait till it is at thine hand. And thus doing with regard to children and wife and governments and wealth, thou wilt be a worthy guest at the table of the Gods. And if thou even pass over things that are offered to thee, and refuse to take of them, then thou wilt not only share the banquet, but also the dominion of the Gods. For so doing Diogenes and Heraclitus, and the like, both were, and were reported to be, rightly divine.

When thou seest one lamenting in grief because his son is gone abroad, or because he hath lost his goods, look to it that thou be not carried away by the appearance to think that he hath truly fallen into misfortune, in outward things. But be the thought at hand, *It is not the thing itself that afflicts this man—since there are others whom it afflicts not—but the opinion he has about it.* And so far as speech, be not slow to fit thyself to his mood, and even if so it be to lament with him. But have a care that thou lament not also from within.

Remember that thou art an actor in a play, of such a part as it may please the director to assign thee; of a short part if he choose a short part; of a long one if he choose a long. And if he will have thee take the part of a poor man or of a cripple, or a governor, or a private person, mayest thou act that part with grace! For thine it is to act well the allotted part, but to choose it is another's.

When a raven croaks you a bad omen, be not carried away by the appearance; but straightway distinguish with yourself and say, *None of these things bodes aught to myself, but*

*either to this poor body or this wretched property of mine, or to my good repute, or to my children, or to my wife. But to me all omens are fortunate, if I choose to have it so. For whatever of these things may come to pass, it lies with me to have it serve me.*

You may be always victorious if you will never enter into any contest but where the victory depends upon yourself.

When you shall see a man honoured above others, or mighty in power, or otherwise esteemed, look to it that thou deem him not blessed, being carried away by the appearance. For if the essence of the Good be in those things that are in our own power, then neither envy nor jealousy have any place, nor thou thyself shalt not desire to be commander or prince or consul, but to be free. And to this there is one road—scorn of the things that are not in our own power.

Remember, it is not he that strikes or he that reviles that doth any man an injury, but the opinion about these things, that they are injurious. When, then, someone may provoke thee to wrath, know that it is thine own conception which hath provoked thee. Strive, therefore, at the outset not to be carried away by the appearance; for if thou once gain time and delay, thou wilt more easily master thyself.

Death and exile, and all things that appear dreadful, let these be every day before thine eyes. But Death most of all; for so thou wilt neither despise nor too greatly desire any condition of life.

If thou set thine heart upon philosophy, prepare straightway to be laughed at and mocked by many who will say, *Behold, he has suddenly come back to us a philosopher; or, How came you by that brow of scorn?* But do thou cherish no scorn, but hold to those things that seem to thee the best, as one set by God in that place. Remember, too, that if thou abide in that way, those that first mocked thee, the same shall afterwards reverence thee; but if thou yield to them, thou shalt receive double mockery.

If it shall ever happen to thee to be turned to outward things in the desire to please some person, know that thou hast lost thy way of life. Let it be enough for thee in all

things to *be* a philosopher. But if thou desire also to seem one, then seem so to thyself, for this thou canst.

Let such thoughts never afflict thee as, *I shall live unhonoured, and never be anybody anywhere*. For if lack of honour be an evil, thou canst no more fall into evil through another's doings than into vice. Is it, then, of thy own doing to be made a governor, or invited to feasts? By no means. How, then, is this to be unhonoured? How shouldst thou *never be anybody anywhere*, whom it behoves to be somebody only in the things that are in thine own power, wherein it lies with thee to be of the greatest worth?

*But I shall not be able to serve my friends*. How sayst thou? to serve them? They shall not have money from thee, nor shalt thou make them Roman citizens. Who, then, told thee that these were of the things that are in our power, and not alien to us? And who can give that which himself hath not?

*Acquire, then, they say, that we may possess*. If I can acquire, and lose not piety, and faith, and magnanimity withal, show me the way, and I will do it. But if ye will have me lose the good things I possess, that ye may compass things that are not good at all, how unjust and unthinking are ye! But which will ye rather have—money, or a faithful and pious friend? Then, rather take part with me to this end; and ask me not to do aught through which I must cast away those things.

*But, he saith, I shall not do my part in serving my country*. *Again*, what is this service? Thy country shall not have porticos nor baths from thee, and what then? Neither hath she shoes from the smith, nor arms from the cobbler, but it is enough if every man fulfil his own task. And if thou hast made one other pious and faithful citizen for her, art thou, then, of no service? Wherefore, neither shalt thou be useless to thy country.

*What place, then, he saith, can I hold in the State?* Whatever place thou canst, guarding still thy faith and piety. But if in wishing to serve her thou cast away these things, what wilt thou profit her then, when perfected in shamelessness and falsehood?



Is some one preferred before thee at a feast, or in salutation, or in being invited to give counsel? Then, if these things are good, it behoves thee rejoice that he hath gained them; but if evil, be not vexed that thou hast not gained them; but remember that if thou act not as other men to gain the things that are not in our own power, neither canst thou be held worthy of a like reward with them.

For how is it possible for him who will not hang about other men's doors to have a like reward with him who doth so? or him who will not attend on them with him who doth attend? or him who will not flatter them with the flatterer? Thou art unjust, then, and insatiable, if thou desire to gain those things for nothing, without paying the price for which they are sold.

But how much is a lettuce sold for? A penny, perchance. If anyone, then, will spend a penny, he shall have lettuce; but thou, not spending, shalt not have. But think not thou art worse off than he; for as he has the lettuce, so thou the penny which thou wouldst not give.

And likewise in this matter. Thou art not invited to some man's feast? That is, for thou gavest not to the host the price of the supper; and it is sold for flattery, it is sold for attendance. Pay, then, the price, if it will profit thee, for which the thing is sold. But if thou wilt not give the price, and wilt have the thing, greedy art thou and infatuated.

Shalt thou have nothing, then, instead of the supper? Thou shalt have this—not to have praised one whom thou hadst no mind to praise, and not to have endured the insolence of his door-keepers.

The will of Nature is to be learned from matters which do not concern ourselves. Thus, when a boy may break the cup of another man, we are ready to say, *It is a common chance*. Know, then, that when thine own is broken, it behoves thee to be as though it were another man's. And apply this even to greater things. Has another man's child died, or his wife? who is there that will not say, *It is the lot of humanity*. But when his own may die, then straightway it is, *Alas, wretched that I am!* But we should bethink ourselves what we felt on hearing of others in the same plight.



As a mark is not set up to be missed, even so the nature of evil exists not in the universe.

If anyone should set your body at the mercy of every passer-by, you would be indignant. When, therefore, you set your own mind at the mercy of every chance, to be troubled and perturbed when anyone may revile you, have you no shame of this?

Of every work you will take in hand mark well the prefaces and the consequences, and so proceed. For else you shall at first set out eagerly, as not regarding what is to follow; but in the end, if any difficulties have arisen, you will leave it off with shame.

So you wish to conquer in the Olympic games? And I, too, by the Gods; and a fine thing it would be. But mark the prefaces and the consequences, and then set to work. You must go under discipline, eat by rule, abstain from dainties, exercise yourself at the appointed hour, in heat or cold, whether you will or no, drink nothing cold, nor wine at will; in a word, you must give yourself over to the trainer as to a physician. Then in the contest itself there is the digging race,<sup>1</sup> and you are like enough to dislocate your wrist, or turn your ankle, to swallow a great deal of dust, to be soundly drubbed, and after all these things to be defeated.

If, having considered these things, you are still in the mind to enter for the contest, then do so. But without consideration you will turn from one thing to another like a child, who now plays the wrestler, now the gladiator, now sounds the trumpet, then declaims like an actor; and so you, too, will be first an athlete, then a gladiator, then an orator, then a philosopher, and nothing with your whole soul; but as an ape you will mimic everything you see, and be charmed with one thing after another. For you approached nothing with consideration nor regularity, but rashly, and with a cold desire.

And thus some men, having seen a philosopher, and heard discourse like that of Euphrates<sup>2</sup> (yet who indeed can say that

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<sup>1</sup> See reference to this contest in Idyl IV of Theocritus.

<sup>2</sup> A Stoic, the tutor of Pliny the Younger.

any discourse is like his?) desire that they also may become philosophers.

But, O man! consider first what it is you are about to do, and then inquire of your own nature whether you can carry it out. Will you be a pentathlos,<sup>1</sup> or a wrestler? Then, scan your arms and thighs; try your loins. For different men are made for different ends.

Think you, you can be a sage, and continue to eat and drink and be wrathful and take offence just as you were wont? Nay, but you must watch and labour, and withdraw yourself from your household, and be despised by any serving boy, and be ridiculed by your neighbours, and take the lower place everywhere, in honours, in authority, in courts of justice, in dealings of every kind.

Consider these things—whether you are willing at such a price to gain peace, freedom, and an untroubled spirit. And if not, then attempt it not, nor, like a child, play now the philosopher, then the tax-gatherer, then the orator, then the Procurator of Cæsar. For these things agree not among themselves; and good or bad, it behoves you to be one man. You should be perfecting either your own ruling faculty, or your outward well-being; spending your art either on the life within or the life without: that is to say, you must hold your place either among the sages or the vulgar.

Obligations are universally defined by the bonds of relation. Is such a man your father? Then you are to bear dictation from him, to take care of him, to give place to him in all things, to bear his rebukes, his chastisement. *But if he be a bad father?* Were you then related by any law of Nature to a good father? Nay, but simply to a father. Your brother does you wrong. Then guard your own place towards him, nor scrutinise what he is doing, but what you may do to keep your will in accord with Nature. For none other shall hurt you, if yourself choose it not, but you shall be hurt then when you conceive yourself to be so.

Thus shall you discover your obligations from the offices

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<sup>1</sup> The pentathlos contended in five athletic exercises—viz., running, leaping, throwing the quoit, throwing the javelin, wrestling.

of a neighbour, a citizen, a general, if you will accustom yourself to watch the relationships.

Of religion towards the Gods, know that the chief element is to have right opinions concerning them, as existing and governing the whole in fair order and justice; and then to set thyself to obey them, and to yield to them in each event, and submit to it willingly, as accomplished under the highest counsels. For so shalt thou never blame the Gods, nor accuse them, as being neglectful of thee.

But this may come to pass in no other way than by placing Good and Evil in the things that are in our own power, and withdrawing them from those that are not; for if thou take any of these things to be good or evil, then when thou shalt miss thy desire, or fall into what thou desirest not, it is altogether necessary that thou blame and hate those who caused thee to do so.

For every living thing was so framed by Nature as to flee and turn from things, and the causes of things, that appear hurtful, and to follow and admire things, and the causes of things, that appear serviceable. For it is impossible that one who thinketh himself harmed should delight in that which seemeth to harm him, even as he cannot delight in the very harm itself.

And thus it comes that a father is reviled by his son when he will not give him of the things that appear to be good. And this it was that set Polyneices and Eteocles at war with each other—the opinion, namely, that royalty is a good. And through this the Gods are railed on by the husbandman and the sailor, by the merchant, and men who lose their wives or children. For where advantage is, there also is religion. Thus he who is careful to pursue and avoid as he ought, is careful, at the same time, of religion.

But it is fitting also that every man should pour libations and offer sacrifices and first-fruits after the customs of his fathers, purely, and not languidly nor negligently, nor, indeed, scantily, nor yet beyond his means.

When thou goest to inquire of an oracle, remember that what the event will be thou knowest not, for this is the thing thou art come to learn from the seer; but of what nature it is

(if haply thou art a philosopher), thou knewest already in coming. For if it be any of those things that are not in our own power, it follows of necessity that it can be neither good nor evil.

Bring, therefore, to the seer neither pursuit nor avoidance, nor go before him with trembling, but well knowing that all events are indifferent and nothing to thee. For whatever it may be, it shall lie with thee to use it nobly; and this no man can prevent. Go, then, with a good courage to the Gods as to counsellors; and for the rest, when anything hath been counselled thee, remember of whom thou hast taken counsel, and whom thou wilt be slighting if thou art not obedient.

Therefore, as Socrates would have it, go to the oracle for those matters only where thy whole inquiry bendeth solely towards the event, and where there are no means either from reason or any other art for knowing beforehand what it shall behove thee to do. Thus, when it may be needful to share some peril with thy friend or thy country, inquire of no oracle whether thou shouldst do the thing. For if the seer should declare that the sacrifices are inauspicious, this signifies clearly either death, or the loss of some limb, or banishment; yet doth Reason decree that even so thou must stand by thy friend, and share thy country's danger.

Mark, therefore, that greater seer, the Pythian, who cast out of his temple one that, when his friend was being murdered, did not help him.

Ordain for thyself forthwith a certain form and type of conduct, which thou shalt maintain both alone and, when it may chance, among men.

And for the most part keep silence, or speak only what is necessary, and in few words. But when occasion may call thee to speak, then speak, but sparingly, and not about any subject at hap-hazard, nor about gladiators, nor horse races, nor athletes, nor things to eat and drink, which are talked of everywhere; but, above all, not about men, as blaming or praising or comparing them.

If, then, thou art able, let thy discourse draw that of the



company towards what is seemly and good. But if thou find thyself apart among men of another sort, keep silence.

Laugh not much, nor at many things, nor unrestrainedly.

Refuse altogether, if thou canst, to take an oath; if thou canst not, then as the circumstances allow.

Shun banquets given by strangers and by the vulgar. But if any occasion bring thee to them, give strictest heed, lest thou fall unawares into the ways of the vulgar. For know that if thy companion be corrupt, he who hath conversation with him must needs be corrupted also, even if himself should chance to be pure.

In things that concern the body accept only so far as the bare need—as in food, drink, clothing, habitation, servants. But all that makes for glory or luxury thou must utterly proscribe.

Concerning intercourse of the sexes, it is right to be pure before marriage, to the best of thy power. But, using it, let a man have to do only with what is lawful. Yet be not grievous to those who use such pleasures, nor censorious; nor be often putting thyself forward as not using them.

If one shall bear thee word that such a one hath spoken evil of thee, then do not defend thyself against his accusations, but make answer: *He little knew my other vices, or he had not mentioned only these.*

There is no necessity to go often to the arena, but if occasion should take thee there, do not appear ardent on any man's side but thine own; that is to say, choose that only to happen which does happen, and that the conqueror may be simply he who wins; for so shalt thou not be thwarted. But from shouting and laughing at this or that, or violent gesticulation, thou must utterly abstain. And when thou art gone away, converse little on the things that have passed, so far as they make not for thine own correction. For from that it would appear that admiration of the spectacle had overcome thee.

Go not freely nor indiscriminately to recitations.<sup>1</sup> But

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<sup>1</sup> Of ostentatious authors from their own works.



if thou go, then preserve (yet without being grievous to others) thy gravity and calmness.

When thou art about to meet anyone, especially one of those that are thought high in rank, set before thy mind what Socrates or Zeno had done in such a case. And so thou wilt not fail to deal as it behoves thee with the occasion.

When thou goest to any of those that are great in power, set before thy mind the case that thou wilt not find him at home, that thou wilt be shut out, that the doors may be slammed in thy face, that he will take no notice of thee. And if even with these things it behoves thee to go, then go, and bear all that happens; and never say to thyself—*It was not worth this*. For that is the part of the foolish, and of those that are offended at outward things.

In company, be it far from thee to dwell much and overmeasure on thine own deeds and dangers. For to dwell on thine own dangers is pleasant indeed to thee, but not equally pleasant for others is it to hear of the things that have chanced to thee.

Be it far from thee to move laughter. For that habit is a slippery descent into vulgarity; and it is always enough to relax thy neighbour's respect for thee.

And it is dangerous to approach to vicious conversation. Therefore, when anything of the kind may arise, rebuke, if there is opportunity, him who approacheth thereto. But if not, then at least by silence and blushing and grave looks, let it be plain that his talk is disagreeable to thee.

Every skill and faculty is maintained and increased by the corresponding acts; as, the faculty of walking by walking, of running by running. If you will read aloud well, then do it constantly; if you will write, then write. But when you have not read aloud for thirty days together, but done something else, you shall see the result. Thus, if you have lain down for ten days, then rise up and endeavour to walk a good distance, and you shall see how your legs are enfeebled. In general, then, if you would make yourself skilled in anything, then do it; and if you would refrain from anything, then do it not, but use yourself to do rather some other thing instead of it.

And thus it is in spiritual things also. When thou art wrathful, know that not this single evil hath happened to thee, but that thou hast increased the aptness to it, and, as it were, poured oil upon the fire. When thou art overcome in passion, think not that this defeat is all; but thou hast nourished thine incontinence, and increased it. For it is impossible but that aptitudes and faculties should spring up where they were not before, or spread and grow mightier, by the corresponding acts. And thus, surely, do also, as the philosophers say, the infirmities of the soul grow up. For when thou hast once been covetous of money, if Reason, which leadeth to a sense of the vice, be called to aid, then both the desire is set at rest, and our ruling faculty is re-established, as it was in the beginning. But if thou bring no remedy to aid, then shall the soul return no more to the first estate; but when next excited by the corresponding appearance, shall be kindled to desire even more quickly than before. And when this is continually happening, the soul becomes callous in the end, and through its infirmity the love of money is strengthened. For he that hath had a fever, when the illness hath left him, is not what he was before his fever, unless he have been entirely healed. And somewhat on this wise also it happens in the affections of the soul; certain traces and scars are left in it, the which if a man do not wholly eradicate, when he hath been again scourged on the same place, it shall make no longer scars, but sores.

Wouldst thou, then, be no longer of a wrathful temper? Then do not nourish the aptness to it, give it nothing that will increase it, be tranquil from the outset, and number the days when thou hast not been wrathful. *I have not been wrathful now for one, now for two, now for three days*; but if thou have saved thirty days, then sacrifice to God. For the aptness is at first enfeebled, and then destroyed. *To-day I was not vexed, nor to-morrow, nor for two or three months together; but I was heedful when anything happened to move me thus.* Know that thou art in good case. To-day, when I saw a fair woman, I did not say to myself, *Would that one could possess her*; nor, *Happy is her husband*, for he who saith this saith also, *Happy is her paramour*; nor do I picture to my mind what should follow. But I stroke my head, and say, *Well*

*done, Epictetus! you have solved a fine sophism, finer by far than the master sophism.* But if she were also willing and consenting, and sent to me, and if she also laid hold of me, and drew near to me, and I should yet restrain myself and conquer, this were, indeed, then, a sophism above the Liar, above the Quiescent. Verily, for this a man's spirit may rightly swell, and not for propounding the master sophism.<sup>1</sup>

How, then, may this come to pass? Resolve at last to seek thine own commendation, to appear fair in the eyes of God; desire to become pure with thine own pure self, and with God. Then when thou shalt fall in with any appearance such as we have spoken of, what saith Plato? *Go to the purifying sacrifices, go and pray in the temples of the protecting Gods.* It shall even suffice if thou seek the company of good and wise men, and try thyself by one of them, whether he be one of the living or of the dead.

When thou hast received the appearance of some pleasure, then, as in other things, guard thyself lest thou be carried away by it, but delay with thyself a little, and let the thing await thee for a while. Then bethink thyself of the two periods of time, one when thou shalt be enjoying the pleasure, the other, when, having enjoyed it, thou shalt afterwards repent of it and reproach thyself. And set on the other side how thou shalt rejoice and commend thyself if thou abstain.

But if it seem reasonable to thee to do the thing, beware lest thou have been conquered by the flattery and the sweetness and the allurements of it. But set on the other side how much better were the consciousness of having won that victory.

In doing aught which thou hast clearly discerned as right to do, seek never to avoid being seen in the doing of, even though the multitude should be destined to form some wrong

<sup>1</sup> The sophism, or puzzle, called the Liar, ran thus:—A liar says he lies: if it is true, he is no liar; and if he lies, he is speaking truth. The Quiescent was an invention attributed by Cicero to Chrysippus. When asked of a gradually-increasing number of things to say when they ceased to be few and became many, he was wont to cease replying, or be "quiescent," shortly before the limit was reached—a device which we have some difficulty in regarding as a fair example of Chrysippus's contributions to the science of logic.

opinion concerning it. For if thou dost not right, avoid the deed itself. But if rightly, why fear those who will wrongly rebuke thee?

As the sayings, *It is day*, *It is night*, are wholly justifiable if viewed disjunctively, but not if viewed together, even so at a feast, to pick out the largest portion for oneself may be justifiable, if we look to the needs of the body alone, but is unjustifiable if viewed as it concerns the preservation of the proper community in the feast. Therefore, in eating with another person, remember not to look only at the value for the body of the things that are set before thee, but to preserve also the reverence due to the giver of the feast.

If thou hast assumed a part beyond thy power to play, then thou hast both come to shame in that, and missed one thou couldst have well performed.

In going about, you are careful not to step upon a nail or to twist your foot. Care thus also, lest you injure your ruling faculty. And if we observe this in each thing we do, we shall the more safely undertake it.

The measure of gain for each man is the body, as the foot is for the shoe. Take your stand on this, and you shall preserve the measure. But if you transgress it, you must thenceforth be borne, as it were, down a steep. And so it is with the shoe, for if you will go beyond the measure of the foot, the shoe will be first gilded, then dyed purple, then embroidered. For that which hath once transgressed its measure hath no longer any limit.

From the age of fourteen years women are flattered and worshipped by men. Seeing thus that there is nothing else for them but to serve the pleasure of men, they begin to beautify themselves, and to place all their hopes in this. It were well, then, that they should perceive themselves to be prized for nothing else than modesty and decorum.

It betokens a dull nature to be greatly occupied in matters that concern the body, as to be much concerned about exercising oneself, in eating, in drinking, and other bodily acts. But these things should be done by the way, and all attention be given to the mind.

When some one may do you an injury, or speak ill of



you, remember that he either does it or speaks it believing that it is right and meet for him to do so. It is not possible, then, that he can follow the thing that appears to you, but the thing that appears to him. Wherefore, if it appear evil to him, it is he that is injured, being deceived. For also if anyone should take a true consequence to be false, it is not the consequence that is injured, but he which is deceived. Setting out, then, from these opinions, you will bear a gentle mind towards any man who may revile you. For, say on each occasion, *So it appeared to him.*

Every matter hath two handles—by the one it may be carried; by the other, not. If thy brother do thee wrong, take not this thing by the handle, *He wrongs me*; for that is the handle whereby it may not be carried. But take it rather by the handle, *He is my brother, nourished with me*; and thou wilt take it by a handle whereby it may be carried.

There is no true conclusion in these reasonings: *I am richer than thou, therefore I am better: I am more eloquent than thou, therefore I am better.* But the conclusions are rather these: *I am richer than thou, therefore my wealth is better: I am more eloquent than thou, therefore my speech is better.* But thou art not wealth, and thou art not speech.

Doth a man bathe himself quickly? Then, say not, *Wrongly*, but *Quickly*. Doth he drink much wine? Then say not, *Wrongly*, but *Much*. For whence do you know if it were ill done till you have understood his opinion?

Thus it shall not befall you to assent to any other things than those whereof you are truly and directly sensible.

Thou shalt never proclaim thyself a philosopher, nor speak much among the vulgar of the philosophic maxims; but do the things that follow from the maxims. For example, do not discourse at a feast upon how one ought to eat, but eat as one ought. For remember that even so Socrates everywhere banished ostentation, so that men used to come to him desiring that he would recommend them to teachers of philosophy, and he brought them away and did so, so well did he bear to be overlooked.

And if among the vulgar discourse should arise concerning some maxim of thy philosophy, do thou, for the most part,



keep silence, for there is great risk that thou straightway vomit up what thou hast not digested. And when someone shall say to thee, *Thou knowest naught*, and it bites thee not, then know that thou hast begun the work.

And as sheep do not bring their food to the shepherds to show how much they have eaten, but digesting inwardly their provender, bear outwardly wool and milk, even so do not thou, for the most part, display the maxims before the vulgar, but rather the works which follow from them when they are digested.

When you have adapted the body to a frugal way of living, do not flatter yourself on that, nor if you drink only water, say, on every opportunity, *I drink only water*. And if you desire at any time to inure yourself to labour and endurance, do it to yourself and not unto the world. And do not embrace the statues; but some time when you are exceedingly thirsty take a mouthful of cold water, and spit it out, and say nothing about it.

The position and token of the vulgar: he looks never to himself for benefit or hurt, but always to outward things. The position and character of the philosopher; he looks for benefit or hurt only to himself.

The tokens of one that is making advance: he blames none, he praises none, he accuses none, he complains of none; he speaks never of himself, as being somewhat, or as knowing aught. When he is thwarted or hindered in aught, he accuseth himself. If one should praise him, he laughs at him in his sleeve; if one should blame him, he makes no defence. He goes about like the sick and feeble, fearing to move the parts that are settling together before they have taken hold. He hath taken out of himself all pursuit, and hath turned all avoidance to things in our power which are contrary to nature. Toward all things he will keep his inclination slack. If he is thought foolish or unlearned, he regardeth it not. In a word, he watches himself as he would a treacherous enemy.

When some one may exalt himself in that he is able to understand and expound the works of Chrysippus, say then to thyself: If Chrysippus had not written obscurely, this man would have had nothing whereon to exalt himself. But I, what

do I desire? Is it not to learn to understand Nature and to follow her? I inquire, then, who can expound Nature to me, and hearing that Chrysippus can, I betake myself to him. But I do not understand his writings, therefore I seek an expounder for them. And so far there is nothing exalted. But when I have found the expounder; it remaineth for me to put in practice what he declares to me, and in this alone is there anything exalted. But if I shall admire the bare exposition, what else have I made of myself than a grammarian instead of a philosopher, save, indeed, that the exposition is of Chrysippus and not of Homer? When, therefore, one may ask me to lecture on the philosophy of Chrysippus, I shall rather blush when I am not able to show forth works of a like nature and in harmony with the words.

Abide in thy purposes as in laws which it were impious to transgress. And whatsoever any man may say of thee, regard it not; for neither is this anything of thine own.

How long wilt thou delay to hold thyself worthy of the best things, and to transgress in nothing the decrees of Reason? Thou hast received the maxims by which it behoves thee to live; and dost thou live by them? What teacher dost thou still look for to whom to hand over the task of thy correction? Thou art no longer a boy, but already a man full grown. If, then, thou art neglectful and sluggish, and ever making resolve after resolve, and fixing one day after another on which thou wilt begin to attend to thyself, thou wilt forget that thou art making no advance, but wilt go on as one of the vulgar sort, both living and dying.

Now, at last, therefore hold thyself worthy to live as a man of full age and one who is pressing forward, and let everything that appeareth the best be to thee as an inviolable law. And if any toil or pleasure or reputation or the loss of it be laid upon thee, remember that now is the contest, here already are the Olympian games, and there is no deferring them any longer, and that in a single day and in a single trial ground is to be lost or gained.

It was thus that Socrates made himself what he was, in all things that befell him having regard to no other thing

than Reason. But thou, albeit thou be yet no Socrates, yet as one that would be Socrates, so it behoveth thee to live.

The first and most necessary point in philosophy is the use of the precepts, for example, not to lie. The second is the proof of these, as, whence it comes that it is wrong to lie. The third is that which giveth confirmation and coherence to the others, such as, Whence it comes that this is proof? for what is proof? what is consequence? what is contradiction? what is truth? what is falsehood?

Thus the third point is necessary through the second, and the second through the first. But the most necessary of all, and that when we should rest, is the first. But we do the contrary. For we linger on the third point, and spend all our zeal on that, while of the first we are utterly neglectful, and thus we are liars; but the explanation of how it is shown to be wrong to lie we have ever ready to hand.

Hold in readiness for every need, these—<sup>1</sup>

“Lead me, O Zeus, and thou Destiny, whithersoever ye have appointed me to go, and may I follow fearlessly. But if in an evil mind I be unwilling, still must I follow.”

“That man is wise among us, and hath understanding of things divine, who hath nobly agreed with Necessity.”

But the third also—

“O Crito, if so it seem good to the Gods so let it be. Anytus and Meletus are able to kill me indeed, but to harm me, never.”

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<sup>1</sup> The first passage is from Cleanthes; the second from a lost play of Euripides; and the third is from Socrates's Apology.

PLOTINUS  
ON THE  
IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

*TRANSLATED BY*  
THOMAS TAYLOR

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*WITH AN INTRODUCTION ON*  
THE NEO-PLATONISTS





## INTRODUCTION

### THE NEO-PLATONISTS

GREEK philosophy came to a close in the third century A.D. with the school of Neo-Platonism, the founder of which was AMMONIUS SACCAS, or SACCOPHORUS (Pack-bearer), so-called because in early life he was a porter. This philosopher was born at Alexandria, in Egypt, of Christian parents at the close of the second century A.D. He attended the catechetical schools of that city, where he received instruction from such eminent Christian philosophers as Athenagoras, Pantœnus, and Clemens Alexandrinus (St. Clement). He did not, however, accept the Christian philosophy as taught him, but sought to reconcile it with that of Plato and other pagans. Accordingly he established an eclectic school, which attracted both Christians and pagans, who became enthusiastic disciples, calling their teacher Theodidactus, or the Heaven-taught One. He wrote nothing, but gave his instruction orally under an oath of secrecy. He died about A.D. 243.

For his philosophy we must read the writings of his most distinguished disciple, PLOTINUS, who stood to his master in the same relation that Plato did to Socrates.

This, the last great pagan Greek philosopher, was born A.D. 205 at Lycopolis, in Egypt. In his twenty-eighth year he applied himself to philosophy, seeking instruction of the most famous teachers of Alexandria. None were able to satisfy him until he met with Ammonius Saccas. With him he spent eleven years as an ardent disciple; then, in 243 A.D. he joined the expedition of the Emperor Gordian against the Persians, hoping to learn the philosophy of Zoroaster. In this purpose he failed, owing to the disastrous result of the expedition; he was even obliged to flee for his life to Antioch. The next year he set out for Rome, where he taught the Neo-Platonic philosophy with great success for twenty-five years, until his death in 270 A.D. He even made converts of the Emperor

Gallienus and his wife Salonina, and with their approval projected an ideal city, according to the scheme of Plato's Republic, in Campania, to be called Platonopolis. The plan, however, was nipped in the bud by the imperial counsellors.

The writings of Plotinus consist of fifty-four treatises, which were published after his death by his pupil and biographer, PORPHYRY. These treatises systematize the Neo-Platonic doctrines in serious and sententious language, and with a profundity of thought that renders them worthy to be studied with the works of the source of his philosophy, the great Plato himself. They are permeated by a mysticism, however, that developed in his successors into all sorts of fantastic absurdities. His chief esoteric tenet was the ecstatic elevation of the soul to the divine being, which state, according to the testimony of Porphyry, Plotinus himself attained on four occasions.

The treatise here presented as representative of the philosophy of Plotinus, is *On the Immortality of the Soul*, the same subject as that of the *Phædo* of Plato (see page 127). It is in the translation of Thomas Taylor.

The philosophy of Plotinus became a system of charlatanry in the hands of a pupil of Porphyry, IAMBlichus, a native of Chalcis in Cœle-Syria, who died A.D. 330. He was a miracle worker, and writer of occult works of various sorts, such as the mysteries of mathematics, and the mysteries of Egypt. His book on the latter subject has been translated into English by Thomas Taylor.

The doctrines of the later Neo-Platonists have been well presented to English readers by Charles Kingsley in his *Hypatia*. The heroine of this novel, HYPATIA, was an historical person, who was born in Alexandria, Egypt, near the end of the fourth century, A.D. She was the daughter of a mathematician, Theon, and became more famous in this science than her father. Attracted by the philosophy of Plato, she travelled to Athens, and attended lectures there upon the subject. Returning to Alexandria, she was invited by the city authorities to give public lectures on philosophy. Like Ammonius Saccas she was an eclectic, choosing and harmonizing the best of all extant philosophies. Being a mathematician, she based her

instruction on the exact sciences, demonstrating by them the speculative sciences. Hypatia, with all her masculinity of intellect, possessed great beauty and feminine charm. Marriage she rejected as an interference with her studies. She numbered among her admiring disciples many celebrated men. Orestes, governor of Alexandria, sought her advice. Synesius, afterwards Bishop of Ptolemais, remained throughout his life her warm admirer and defender, although she constantly refused his entreaties to become a Christian.

St. Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria, denounced her, however, as the great advocate of paganism, and the most fanatical of his followers seized her as she was going to her lecture hall, dragged her from her chariot into a church, stripped her of her garments and put her to death, hacking her body with oyster-shells; then, dragging the bloody remains through the streets, they burned them in the outskirts of the city. Fire also destroyed all her works, these perishing in the burning of the Alexandrian Library.

Neo-Platonism established its seat in Athens about 400 A.D. under one PLUTARCHUS, who was succeeded by SYRIANUS a native of Alexandria. Syrianus wrote several works, some of which are extant. The most valuable is a commentary on the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle. He was followed by PROCLUS, a profound thinker and teacher of high morality, who attached to himself many devoted followers, one of whom, MARINUS, who became his successor, wrote an eulogistic biography of him. Proclus attempted to support paganism in its struggle with Christianity by reducing to a system centering in Platonism all the philosophic, moral, and religious traditions of antiquity. He was also a writer on grammar, mathematics and astronomy. **Many of his works are extant.**

Neo-Platonism "winked out" at Athens with DAMASCIUS (so-called because born at Damascus), a pupil of Marinus. He was a sound scholar, but not an original thinker, devoting himself particularly to settling doubtful points in philosophy, and to mathematics.

Neo-Platonism lived a while longer at Alexandria. The last notable philosopher of the sect was HIEROCLES, who flourished about the middle of the fifth century, A.D. He has left

treatises on Providence, Destiny, and Free-will, the purpose of which is to show the agreement of Plato and Aristotle on these subjects, and to refute the views thereon of the Stoics and Epicureans. He also collected many amusing anecdotes of pedants, similar to the modern German jokes which make a butt of the absent-minded and impractical Herr Professor.

## PLOTINUS

### ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

WHETHER each part of us is immortal, or the whole perishes, or one part of us is dissipated and corrupted, but another part perpetually remains, which part is the man himself, may be learnt by considering conformably to nature as follows: Man, indeed, is not something simple, but there is in him a soul, and he has also a body, whether it is annexed to us as an instrument, or after some other manner. However this may be, it must be admitted, that the nature and essence of each of these must be thus divided. Since the body, therefore, is itself a composite, reason shows that it cannot remain perpetually the same: and sense likewise sees that it is dissolved and wastes away, and receives all-various destructions; since each of the things inherent in it tends to its own, *i.e.* to the whole form from which it was derived, and one thing belonging to it corrupts another, and changes and perishes into something else. This, too, is especially the case when the soul, which causes the parts to be in friendly union with each other, is not present with the corporeal masses. If each body, likewise, is left by itself, it will not be one, since it is capable of being dissolved into form and matter, from which it is also necessary that simple bodies should have their composition. Moreover, as being bodies they have magnitude, and consequently may be cut and broken into the smallest parts, and through this are the recipients of corruption. Hence, if body is a part of us, we are not wholly immortal. But if it is an instrument of the soul it is necessary that being given for a certain time, it should be naturally a thing of this kind. That, however, which is the most principal thing, and the man himself, will be that with reference to the body which form is with reference to matter, since this according to form is as body to matter; or according to that which uses, the body has the relation to it of an instrument. But in each way soul is the man himself.

What, therefore, is the nature of this thing (soul)? If



indeed it is a body, it is in every respect capable of being analyzed. For every body is a composite. But if it is not a body, but of another nature, that also must be considered either after the same, or after another manner. In the first place, however, it must be considered into what body this body which they call soul ought to be analyzed. For since life is necessarily present with soul, it is also necessary that this body which is supposed to be soul, if it consists of two or more bodies, should have a connascent life in both, or in each of them; or that one of these should have life, but the other not, or that neither should be vital. If, therefore, life is present with one of them only, this very thing will be soul. Hence, what body will this be which has life from itself? For fire, air, water and earth, are of themselves inanimate; and with whichever of these soul is present, the life which it uses is adventitious. There are not, however, any other bodies besides these. And those to whom it appears that there are other bodies the elements of these, do not assert that they are souls, or that they have life. But if it should be said, that though no one of these bodies possesses life, yet the congress of them produces life, he who says this would speak absurdly. And if each of them has life, one will be sufficient. Or rather, it is impossible that a coacervation of bodies should produce life, and things void of intellect generate intellect. Moreover, neither will these, in whatever manner they may say they are mixed, generate either intellect or soul. Hence, it is necessary there should be that which arranges, and which is the cause of the mixture; so that this will have the order of soul. For that which is compounded will not be that which arranges and produces the mixture. But neither will there be a simple body in the series of things, without the existence of soul in the universe; if reason (or a productive principle) acceding to matter, produces body. For reason cannot proceed from any thing else than from soul.

If some one, however, should say that an assemblage of atoms or impartibles produce soul by their union, such a one will be confuted by similitude of passion, and by apposition; since one thing will not thus be generated through the whole, nor will that which is co-passive be produced from bodies which are without passion and incapable of being united. But soul is

co-passive with itself. And of impartibles neither body nor magnitude can consist. Moreover, with respect to a simple body, they will not say that it has life from itself so far as it is material. For matter is void of quality. But they will rather say that what is arranged in body according to form possesses life. Hence, if they say that this form is essence, soul will not be both, but one of these; and this will no longer be body. For this will not also consist of matter; since if it did, we must again analyze it after the same manner. But if they assert that this form is a passion of matter and not essence, they must inform us what that is from which this passion and life are derived into matter. For matter will not give form to itself, nor insert soul in itself. Hence, it is necessary that there should be something which is the supplier of life, whether the supply is to matter, or to a certain body, this supplier being external to, and beyond every corporeal nature. Indeed, neither will there be any body, if there is no psychical power. For body perpetually flows, and its nature is in continual motion. The universe also would rapidly perish if all things were bodies; though some one of them should be denominated soul. For it would suffer the same things as other bodies, since there would be one matter in all of them. Or rather, nothing would be generated, but all things would stop in matter, as there would not be anything to invest it with form. Perhaps, too, neither would matter have any subsistence whatever. This universe also will be dissolved, if it is committed to the connexion of body, and the order of soul is given to body, as far as to names, viz. to air and a dissipable spirit, and which has not from itself any oneness. For how is it possible, since all bodies are divisible, that this universe if it is committed to any one of them, should not be borne along in a foolish and casual manner? For what order is there, or reason or intellect, in a pneumatic substance, which is in want of order from soul? But if soul, indeed, has a subsistence, all these will be subservient to it in order to the composition of the world, and the existence of every animal, a different power contributing from a different thing to the perfection of the whole. If soul, however, is not present to the whole of things, these will neither have a subsistence, nor any arrangement.

Compelled by truth, the authors of the above mentioned hypothesis also testify, that it is necessary there should be a certain form of soul prior to and more excellent than bodies. For they introduce a spirit endued with intellect, and an intellectual fire, as if it was not possible there could be a better condition among beings without fire and spirit, and without a place in which it might be established, though they ought to have investigated where bodies are to be placed; for it is necessary that these should be established in the powers of soul. But if they assert that life and soul are nothing else than a spirit or wind, we must enquire what this celebrated spirit introduced by them is, and how it subsists. For they are compelled to fly to this when they admit that there is another efficacious nature besides bodies. If therefore not every spirit is soul, because there are myriads of inanimate spirits, but a spirit subsisting after a certain manner is according to them soul, we ask them whether they say that such a spirit and this habitude is something belonging to beings, or nothing. But if indeed it is nothing, it will be a name alone. And its subsistence after a certain manner will be also merely a name, and thus it will be an accident to beings. Hence, according to them nothing but matter will have an existence, and soul, deity, and every thing except matter will be merely names. If, however, habitude is something pertaining to beings, and different from a subject and from matter and subsists indeed in matter, but is itself immaterial, because it is not again composed from matter;—if this be the case, it will be a certain reason (or productive principle) and will not be body, but of another nature. Farther still, from the following considerations it will be no less manifest that it is impossible for soul to be any body whatever. For it would either be hot or cold, or hard, or soft, or moist, or firm, or black, or white, and all such different qualities as are in different bodies. And if indeed it is hot alone, it will alone heat; if cold alone, it will alone refrigerate. If also it is alone light, it will by its presence cause things to be light; if heavy, it will alone render them heavy; if black, it will blacken; and if white, will cause them to be white. For it is not the province of fire to refrigerate, nor of cold to produce heat. But soul produces differ-

ent effects in different animals, and contrary effects in the same animal; fixing some things, but diffusing others. And some things indeed it causes to be dense, but others rare, black, white, light and heavy; though from the nature of one body it ought to produce one quality only, and not different qualities. But now it produces many qualities.

With respect to motions also, why are different motions produced by the soul, and not one only, there being but one natural motion of every body? But if they assign deliberate choice as the cause of some motions, and reasons (or productive principles) as the causes of others, these indeed are rightly assigned. Deliberate choice, however, does not pertain to body nor reasons, since they are different, but an elementary body is one and simple. Nor can such a body be full of productive power except so far as this is imparted to it by that which makes it to be hot or cold. But how can it belong to body to increase at certain times, and to a certain extent, since it is naturally adapted to be increased, except so far as the power of augmenting is assumed in the bulk of matter, and is subservient to that which through it produces the increase? For if soul being body increases, it is necessary that it should also be increased, viz. by the addition of a similar body, in order that it may be of an equal bulk with that which is increased by it. And that which is added will either be soul, or an inanimate body. And if indeed it is soul, whence and how is it introduced, and how is it added? But if that which is added is inanimate, how is this animated, how does it accord with the preceding soul, and become one with it, and how does it entertain the same opinions with the former soul? Will not this added soul, as being foreign, be ignorant of what the other knows? And in the same manner as with another mass belonging to our frame, there will be an efflux from, and an influx into it, and nothing will continue the same. How, therefore, shall we remember? And how shall we recognize such things as are appropriate to us, since we shall never employ the same soul? Moreover, if soul is body, since the nature of body is divided into many parts, each of the parts will not be the same with the whole. If, therefore, soul was a magnitude of a certain quantity, if this quantity should become less, it



would no longer be soul; just as the being of every quantity is changed by ablation, from what it was before. But if some one of those things which have magnitude, being diminished in bulk, should remain the same in quality, so far indeed as it is body, and so far as it is quantity, it is different from what it was; but through quality which is different from quantity it is able to preserve itself the same. What, therefore, will those say who contend that the soul is body? In the first place, indeed, with respect to each part of the soul which is in the same body, is each part soul in the same manner as the whole soul? And again, is this the case with the part of a part? For if this is admitted, magnitude will contribute nothing to the essence of the soul; though it is necessary that it should if soul is a certain quantity. The whole soul, likewise, is every where present with the body; but it is impossible for the same corporeal whole to be in many things at the same time, or for a part of it to be the same as the whole. And if they say that each of the parts is not soul, then according to them, soul will consist of things inanimate. Besides, if the magnitude of each soul is definite, it will no longer be soul, if it is either extended or diminished. When, therefore, from one copulation and one seed, twins are begotten, or as in other animals many offspring are produced, most of the seed being distributed into many places, where also each part of the seed is a whole, how is it possible this should not teach those who are willing to learn, that where the part is the same with the whole, this in the very essence of itself transcends the nature of quantity; and ought from necessity to be without quantity. For thus alone it can remain the same, quantity being withdrawn, since it has no need of either quantity or bulk, its essence being something different from either. Hence soul and reasons (or productive principles) are void of quantity.

But that if soul is body, it will not be possible to perceive either sensibly or intellectually, or to know scientifically, and that there will neither be virtue, nor any thing beautiful in human conduct, will be manifest from the following considerations. Whatever is able to have a sensible perception of any thing, ought itself to be one, and to apprehend every thing by one and the same power. This will also be the case, if many



things enter through many organs of sense, or there are many qualities about one thing, and likewise when there is a variegated appearance such as that of the face, through one thing. For one thing does not perceive the nose, and another the eyes, but the same thing perceives at once all the parts of the face. And though one thing proceeds through the eyes, but another through the ears, yet it is necessary there should be one thing at which both these arrive. Or how could the soul say that these are different, unless the perceptions of sense at once terminated in the same thing? It is necessary, therefore, that this should be as it were a centre, that the senses should on all sides be extended to this, like lines from the circumference of a circle, and that a thing of this kind which apprehends the perceptions of sense should be truly one. For if it were any thing divisible, and the informations of the senses arrived at this as at the two extremities of a line, they must either again concur in one and the same thing as a middle, or there would be another thing there and another, and each would have a sensible perception of each; just as if I should perceive one thing, but you another, even though the object of sense should be one thing, such as the face; or they must be collected into one. And this indeed appears to be the case. For visible forms are collected in the pupils of the eyes; or how through these could the greatest things be seen? Hence, in a still greater degree the forms which arrive at the ruling part of the soul, become as it were conceptions; and therefore this part also must be impartible. For if it had magnitude, it would be co-divided with the object of sensible perception. Hence, one part of it would perceive a part of the sensible object, and nothing in us would have the apprehension of the whole of a sensible thing. But the whole is one thing. For how can it be divided? For in the division, equal cannot be adapted to equal, because the ruling part is not equal to every sensible thing. Into how many parts, therefore, must the division of it be made? Must it be divided into as many parts, as the sensible perception which is introduced to it, is divided into? And will each of the parts of the soul, therefore, perceive the parts of the sensible object? Or shall we say that the parts of the soul will not have a sensation of the parts of the thing per-

ceived? This however is impossible. But if any part whatever perceives the whole of the sensible object, since magnitude is adapted to be divided infinitely, it will happen that infinite sensible perceptions will be produced about each part; so that, for instance, there will be infinite images of the same thing in our ruling part. Moreover, if that which perceives is body, it will not be able to perceive in any other way, than as if certain images were impressed from wax in a seal; whether the sensible forms are impressed in blood, or in air. And if, indeed, they are impressed as in moist bodies, which it is reasonable to suppose they will be, if as in water, they will be confounded, and there will be no memory. But if the impressions remain, either it will not be possible for others to be impressed while they remain, so that there will be no other sensible perceptions, or if others are produced, the former will be destroyed, so that there will not be a remembrance of any thing. But if it is possible to remember, and to have a sensible perception of other things after others, the former not impeding the latter, it is impossible for the soul to be body.

The same thing also may be seen from pain and the sensation of pain; when a man is said to have a pain in his finger or about his finger. For then it is manifest that the sensation of pain is produced about the principal or ruling part; a portion of the spirit being pained, but the ruling part having a perception of the pain, and the whole soul in consequence of this suffering the same thing. How, therefore, does this happen? They will say by succession, the psychical spirit about the finger suffering in the first place, but imparting the passion to that which is next to it, and afterwards to something else, until the passion arrives at the ruling part. Hence, it is necessary if that which is primarily pained perceives, that there should be another sensation of that which is second, if sensation is produced according to succession. And likewise, that there should be another sensation of that which is the third in order; that there should be many and infinite sensible perceptions of one and the same pain; and that afterwards all these should be perceived by the ruling part, and besides these, that it should have a perception of its own passion. In reality, however, each of these does not perceive the pain that is in the finger:

but one sensation perceives that the part of the palm of the hand which is next to the finger is pained, and another more remote sensation perceives the pain which is in a more remote part. There will also be many pains, the ruling part not perceiving the passion which is in the finger, but that which is present with itself. And this it will alone know, but will bid farewell to the others, not perceiving that the finger is pained. If, therefore, it is not possible that sensible perception of a thing of this kind should subsist according to succession, and it does not belong to the body, since it is a bulk, that one part of it suffering, another part should recognize the suffering; for in every magnitude this is one thing, and that another;—if this be the case, it is necessary that the power which perceives should be a thing of such a kind, as to be every where itself the same with itself. But this pertains to any thing else rather than to body.

Moreover, that neither will it be possible to perceive intellectually if the soul is body, may be demonstrated as follows. For if to perceive sensibly is, for the soul using the body to apprehend sensibles, intellectual perception will not be an apprehension of the objects of such perception, through body. For unless this is admitted, intellectual will be the same with sensible perception. Hence, if to perceive intellectually is to apprehend without body, by a much greater priority it is necessary that the nature which thus perceives should not be body. Farther still, if sense indeed is the perception of sensibles, intellection is the perception of intelligibles. If, however, they are not willing to admit this, yet there will be in us intellections of certain intelligibles, and apprehensions of things without magnitude. How, therefore, will intellect if it is magnitude, understand that which is not magnitude, and by that which is partible that which is impartible? Shall we say it will understand it by a certain impartible part of itself? But if this be the case, that which understands will not be body. For there is no need of the whole in order to come into contact with the object of its intellection; since contact according to one certain thing is sufficient. If, therefore, they admit that the first intellections, which is true, are entirely liberated from body, it is necessary that the nature which intellectually perceives the

form separate from body of each thing, should know either real being, or that which is becoming to be. But if they say that intellections are of forms inherent in matter, yet they are then only apprehended when by intellect they are separated from body. For the separation (*i. e.* abstraction) of a circle and triangle, of a line and a point, is not effected in conjunction with flesh, or in short, with matter. Hence it is necessary that the soul also, in a separation of this kind, should separate itself from the body. And therefore it is necessary that it should not be itself body. I think, likewise, that the beautiful and the just are without magnitude, and consequently the intellection of these is unattended with magnitude. Hence, these approaching to us are apprehended by that which is impartible in the soul, and in the soul they reside in the impartible. How also, if the soul is body, can temperance and justice be the virtues of it, which are its saviours, so far as they are received by it?

There must, therefore, be another nature which possesses existence from itself, and such is every thing which is truly being, and which is neither generated, nor destroyed. For without the subsistence of this, all things would vanish into non-entity, and thus perishing, would not afterwards be generated; since this imparts safety to all other things, and also to the universe which through soul is preserved and adorned. For soul is the principle of motion, with which it supplies other things, itself moving itself, and imparting life to the animated body. But it possesses life from itself, which it will never lose, because it is derived from itself. For all things do not use an adventitious life, or there would be a progression of life to infinity. But it is necessary there should be a certain nature primarily vital, which is also necessarily indestructible and immortal, as being the principle of life to other things. Here, likewise, it is requisite that every thing divine and blessed should be established, living from itself, and existing primarily being, and primarily vital, void of essential mutation, and being neither generated nor destroyed. For whence could it be generated, or into what could it perish? If, likewise, it is necessary that the appellation of being should truly belong to this nature, it is requisite that it should not at one



time exist, and at another not; just as a colour which is of itself white, is not at one time white, and at another not white. If, however, whiteness was real being, together with being white, it would likewise always be. But now it possesses whiteness alone. That, however, to which being is present which is from itself, and is primarily being, will always have a subsistence. Hence, this which is primarily and perpetually being, ought not to be destitute of life, like a stone, or a piece of wood, but to be vital, and enjoy a pure life, in that part of itself which is alone permanent. But that part of it which is mingled with a subordinate nature is an impediment to its possession of the best of things, yet it does not through this lose its nature, but resumes its ancient condition, when it recurs to things which are truly its own.

That soul, however, is allied to a more divine and eternal nature, is evident from its not being body as we have demonstrated, and also because it has neither figure nor colour. Moreover, this likewise may be shown from the following considerations. It is acknowledged by all of us, that every divine nature, and which is truly being, enjoys an excellent and wise life. This, therefore, being admitted, it is necessary to consider in the next place, what the nature is of our soul. We must assume the soul, however, not receiving in the body irrational desires and angers, and other passions, but as abolishing all these, and as much as possible having no communication with the body. For such a soul as this will perspicuously show that evils are an addition to the soul, and are externally derived; and that the most excellent things are inherent in it when it is purified, viz. wisdom and every other virtue, which are its proper possessions. If, therefore, the soul is such when it returns to itself, how is it possible it should not belong to that nature which we say is possessed by every thing eternal and divine? For wisdom and true virtue being divine, cannot be inherent in any vile and mortal thing; but that which is of this kind is necessarily divine, as being full of divine goods, through an alliance and similitude of essence to a divine nature. Hence, whoever of us resembles a soul of this description, will in soul itself differ but little from superior beings; in this alone being inferior to them, that he is in body. On



which account, also, if every man was such, or if the multitude employed souls of this kind, no one would be so incredulous as not to believe that our soul is entirely immortal. Now, however, men perceiving that the soul of the greater part of the human race is defiled with vice, they do not reason about it, either as a divine or an immortal thing. *But it is necessary, in considering the nature of every thing, to direct our attention to the purity of it;* since whatever is added, is always an impediment to the knowledge of that to which it is added. Consider the soul, therefore, by taking away that which is extraneous; or rather, let him who takes this away survey himself, and he will believe himself to be immortal, when he beholds himself in the intelligible world, and situated in a pure abode. For he will perceive intellect seeing not any thing sensible, nor any of these mortal objects, but by an eternal power contemplating that which is eternal; every thing in the intelligible world, and itself also being then luminous, in consequence of being enlightened by the truth proceeding from *the good*, which illuminates all intelligibles with reality. By such a soul as this, therefore, it may be properly said,

Farewell, a God immortal now am I,<sup>1</sup>

having ascended to divinity, and earnestly striving to become similar to him. If, however, purification causes the soul to have a knowledge of the most excellent things, the sciences also which are inwardly latent will then shine forth, and which are truly sciences. For the soul does not by running to externals behold temperance and justice, but perceives them herself by herself, in the intellection of herself, and of that which she formerly was, and views them like statues established in herself, which through time have become covered with rust. These she then purifies, just as if gold were animated, and in consequence of being incrustated with earth, and not perceiving itself to be gold, should be ignorant of itself; but afterwards shaking off the earth which adheres to it, should be filled with admiration on beholding itself pure and alone. Then, also, it would perceive that it has no need of adventitious beauty, and

<sup>1</sup> A celebrated line of Empedocles.

would consider with itself that it is then in the best condition when it is permitted to be wholly by itself.

Who, therefore, endued with intellect will doubt that a thing of this kind is not immortal, to which indestructible life is present from itself? For how is it possible it should perish, since it is not adventitious, and is not possessed in the same way as heat is present with fire? I do not mean by this, that heat is adventitious to fire, but that it is so to the subject matter of fire, though it is not to fire itself. For through this fire is dissolved. Soul, however, does not possess life in such a way, as that matter is the subject of it, but life acceding, demonstrates the presence of soul. For either life is essence, and is an essence of such a kind as to live from itself, which is soul, the object of our investigation, and this they acknowledge to be immortal; or they must analyze it as a composite. This, also, they must analyze, till they arrive at that which is immortal, and moved from itself, and to which it is not lawful to receive the destiny of death. Or if they say that life is a passion adventitious to matter, they are compelled to acknowledge that nature to be immortal from which this passion was imparted to matter, and which is incapable of receiving the contrary to that which it imparts. For it is one nature **living in energy.**

Farther still, if they say that every soul is corruptible, it would be requisite that all things should have long since perished. But if they assert that one soul is corruptible, and another not, as for instance, that the soul of the universe is immortal, but ours not, it is necessary that they should assign the cause of this difference. For each is the cause of motion, and each lives from itself. Each, likewise, comes into contact with the same things by the same power, intellectually perceiving the natures in the heavens, and also those that are beyond the heavens, investigating everything which has an essential subsistence, and ascending as far as to the first principle of things. To which may be added, that it is evident the soul gave being to itself prior to the body, from its ability of apprehending what each thing is, by itself, from its own inherent spectacles, and from reminiscence. And from its employing eternal sciences, it is manifest that it is itself perpetual. Be-

sides, since everything which can be dissolved receives composition, hence, so far as a thing is a composite, it is naturally adapted to be dissolved. But soul being one simple energy, and a nature characterized by life, cannot be corrupted as a composite. Will it, therefore, through being divided and distributed into minute parts, perish? Soul, however, is not, as we have demonstrated, a certain bulk or quantity. May it not, therefore, through being changed in quality, be corrupted? Change in quality however which corrupts takes away form, but leaves the subject matter. But this is the passion of a composite. Hence, if it is not possible for the soul to be corrupted according to any of these modes, it is necessarily incorruptible.

How, therefore, since the intelligible is separate, does the soul descend into body? Because so far as intellect alone is impassive in intelligibles, having an intellectual life alone, it abides there eternally. For it has not any impulse, or appetite. But that which receives appetite, and is next in order to that intellect, by the addition of appetite proceeds as it were to a greater extent, and being desirous to adorn, in imitation of the forms which it sees in intellect, it becomes as it were pregnant from them. Hence, becoming parturient, it hastens to make and fabricate, and through this festination becoming extended about a sensible nature, when it subsists in conjunction with the soul of the universe, it transcends the subject of its government, by being external to it, and thus together with the mundane soul presides over the universe with a providential care. But when it wishes to govern a part of the world, it then governs alone, and becomes merged in that in which it is; yet not so as to be wholly absorbed by body, but even then it possesses something external to body. Hence, neither is the intellect of this soul passive. But this soul is at one time in body, and at another external to it. And being impelled, indeed, to descend from first natures, it proceeds as far as to such as rank in the third degree, and to those with which we are conversant, by a certain energy of intellect; intellect at the same time abiding in itself, and through soul filling every thing with all that is beautiful, being an immortal adorer through an immortal soul. For intellect itself also exists eternally, through unceasing energy.

With respect to the souls of other animals, such among these as have fallen from a better condition, and have proceeded as far as to brutal bodies, these likewise are necessarily immortal. But if there is another species of soul, it is necessary that this also should not be derived from any other source than a vital nature, since this likewise is the cause of life to animals, and besides this, of the life which is in plants. For all these proceeding from the same principle, have an appropriate life of their own. And these souls also are incorporeal, impartible, and essences. If, however, it is requisite that the soul of man being tripartite should be dissolved with the composite, we must say that pure souls which are liberated from the body, dismiss that which adhered to them in generation; but that this is accomplished by others in long periods of time. That also which is dismissed, is the worst part, nor will this be destroyed, as long as that subsists from whence it originates. For nothing which is comprehended in being perishes.

And thus much has been said by us to those who require demonstration on this subject. But such things as should be adduced to those who stand in need of the evidence arising from faith mingled with sensible information, may be selected from history, which abounds with instances in confirmation of the immortality of the soul. It may also be obtained from what the Gods have delivered in Oracles, when they order the anger of souls that have been injured, to be appeased; and likewise honours to be paid to the dead, as being still sentient, which honours all men pay to departed souls. Many souls also who once ranked among men, do not cease when liberated from bodies to benefit mankind. And these by employing divination benefit us in other respects, and demonstrate through themselves, that other souls also do not perish.





LONGINUS

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TREATISE

ON THE

SUBLIME

*TRANSLATED BY*

WILLIAM SMITH, D.D.

DEAN OF CHESTER

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*WITH AN INTRODUCTION UPON THE*

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF LONGINUS

BY THE SAME

THEE, GREAT LONGINUS! ALL THE NINE INSPIRE,  
AND FILL THEIR CRITIC WITH A POET'S FIRE;  
AN ARDENT JUDGE, WHO, ZEALOUS IN HIS TRUST,  
WITH WARMTH GIVES SENTENCE, AND IS ALWAYS JUST;  
WHOSE OWN EXAMPLE STRENGTHENS ALL HIS LAWS,  
AND IS HIMSELF THE GREAT SUBLIME HE DRAWS.

— POPE.

## INTRODUCTION

### LIFE AND WRITINGS OF LONGINUS

WHAT countryman Longinus was, cannot certainly be discovered. Some fancy him a Syrian, and that he was born at Emisa, because an uncle of his, one Fronto, a rhetorician, is called by Suidas an Emisenian. But others, with greater probability, suppose him an Athenian. That he was a Grecian, is plain from two passages in the following Treatise;<sup>1</sup> in one of which he uses this expression, "If we Grecians;" and in the other he expressly calls Demosthenes his countryman. His name was Dionysius Longinus, to which Suidas makes the addition of Cassius; but that of his father is entirely unknown; a point (it is true) of small importance, since a son of excellence and worth, reflects a glory upon, instead of receiving any from, his father. By his mother Frontonis he was allied, after two or three removes, to the celebrated Plutarch. We are also at a loss for the employment of his parents, their station in life, and the beginning of his education; but a remnant of his own writings informs us, that his youth was spent in travelling with them, which gave him an opportunity to increase his knowledge, and open his mind with that generous enlargement, which men of sense and judgment will unavoidably receive, from variety of objects and diversity of conversation. The improvement of his mind was always uppermost in his thoughts, and his thirst after knowledge led him to those channels by which it is conveyed. Wherever men of learning were to be found, he was present, and lost no opportunity of forming a familiarity and intimacy with them. Ammonius and Origen, philosophers of no small reputation in that age, were two of those whom he visited and heard with the greatest attention. As he was not deficient in vivacity of parts, quickness of apprehension, and strength of understanding, the progress of his improvement must needs have been equal to

<sup>1</sup> See Sect. xii.

his industry and diligence in seeking after it. He was capable of learning whatever he desired, and no doubt he desired to learn whatever was commendable and useful.

The travels of Longinus ended with his arrival at Athens, where he fixed his residence. This city was then, and had been for some ages, the University of the world. It was the constant resort of all who were able to teach, or willing to improve; the grand and lasting reservoir of philosophy and learning, from whence were drawn every rivulet and stream that watered and cultivated the rest of the world. Here our author pursued the studies of humanity and philosophy with the greatest application, and soon became the most remarkable person in a place so remarkable as Athens. Here he published his Treatise on the Sublime, which raised his reputation to such a height, as no critic, either before or since, durst ever aspire to. He was a perfect master of the ancient writings of Greece, and intimately acquainted not only with the works but the very genius and spirit with which they were written. His cotemporaries there had such an implicit faith in his judgment, and were so well convinced of the perfection of his taste, that they appointed him judge of all the ancient authors, and learned to distinguish between the genuine and spurious productions of antiquity, from his opinions and sentiments about them. He was looked upon by them as infallible and unerring, and therefore by his decrees were fine writing and fine sense established, and his sentence stamped its intrinsic value upon every piece. The entrusting any one person with so delicate a commission, is an extraordinary instance of complaisance: it is without a precedent in every age before, and unparalleled in any of the succeeding; as it is fit it should, till another Longinus shall arise. But in regard to him, it does honour to those who lodged it in his hands. For no classic writer ever suffered in character from an erroneous censure of Longinus. He was, as I observed before, a perfect master of the style and peculiar turn of thought of them all, and could discern every beauty or blemish in every composition. In vain might inferior critics exclaim against this monopoly of judgment. Whatever objections they raised against it were mere air

and unregarded sounds. And whatever they blamed, or whatever they commended, was received or rejected by the public, only as it met with the approbation of Longinus, or was confirmed and ratified by his sovereign decision.

His stay at Athens seems to have been of long continuance, and that city perhaps had never enjoyed so able a Professor of fine learning, eloquence, and philosophy united. Whilst he taught here, he had, amongst others, the famous Porphyry for his pupil. The system of philosophy which he went upon, was the Academic; for whose founder, Plato, he had so great a veneration, that he celebrated the anniversary of his birth with the highest solemnity. There is something agreeable even in the distant fancy; how delightful then must those reflections have been, which could not but arise in the breast of Longinus, that he was explaining and recommending the doctrine of Plato, in those calm retreats where he himself had written; that he was teaching his scholars the eloquence of Demosthenes, on the very spot, perhaps, where he had formerly thundered; and was professing rhetoric in the place where Cicero had studied!

The mind of our Author was not so contracted, as to be fit only for a life of stillness and tranquillity. Fine genius, and a true philosophic turn, qualify not only for study and retirement, but will enable their owners to shine, I will not say in more honourable, but in more conspicuous views, and to appear on the public stage of life with dignity and honour. And it was the fortune of Longinus to be drawn from the contemplative shades of Athens, to mix in more active scenes, to train up young princes to virtue and glory, to guide the busy and ambitious passions of the great to noble ends, to struggle for, and at last to die in the cause of liberty.

During the residence of Longinus at Athens, the Emperor Valerian had undertaken an expedition against the Persians, who had revolted from the Roman yoke. He was assisted in it by Oderathus, king of Palmyra, who, after the death of Valerian, carried on the war with uncommon spirit and success. Gallienus, who succeeded his father Valerian at Rome, being a prince of a weak and effeminate soul, of the most dissolute and abandoned manners, without any shadow



of worth in himself, was willing to get a support in the valour of Odenathus, and therefore he made him his partner in empire by the title of Augustus, and decreed his medals, stricken in honour of the Persian victories, to be current coin throughout the empire. Odenathus, says an historian, seemed born for the empire of the world, and would probably have risen to it, had he not been taken off, in a career of victory, by the treachery of his own relations. His abilities were so great, and his actions so illustrious, that they were above the competition of every person then alive, except his own wife Zenobia, a lady of so extraordinary magnanimity and virtue, that she outshone even her husband, and engrossed the attention and admiration of the world. She was descended from the ancient race of Ptolemy and Cleopatra, and had all those qualifications which are the ornament of her own, and the glory of the other sex. A miracle of beauty, but chaste to a prodigy: in punishing the bad, inflexibly severe; in rewarding the good, or relieving the distressed, benevolent and active. Splendid, but not profuse, and generous without prodigality. Superior to the toils and hardships of war, she was generally on horseback; and would sometimes march on foot with her soldiers. She was skilled in several languages, and is said to have drawn up herself an epitome of the Alexandrian and Oriental history.

The great reputation of Longinus had been wafted to the ears of Zenobia, who prevailed upon him to quit Athens, and undertake the education of her sons. He quickly gained an uncommon share in her esteem, as she found him not only qualified to form the tender minds of the young, but to improve the virtue, and enlighten the understanding of the aged. In his conversation she spent the vacant hours of her life, modelling her sentiments by his instructions, and steering herself by his counsels in the whole series of her conduct; and in carrying on that plan of empire, which she herself had formed, which her husband, Odenathus had begun to execute, but had left imperfect. The number of competitors, who, in the vicious and scandalous reign of Gallienus, set up for the empire, but with abilities far inferior to those of Zenobia, gave her an opportunity to extend her conquests,

by an uncommon tide of success, over all the East. Claudius, who succeeded Gallienus at Rome, was employed during his whole reign, which was very short, against the Northern nations. Their reduction was afterwards completed by Aurelian, the greatest soldier that had for a long time worn the imperial purple. He then turned his arms against Zenobia, being surprised as well at the rapidity of her conquests, as enraged that she had dared to assume the title of Queen of the East.

He marched against her with the best of his forces, and met with no check in his expedition till he advanced as far as Antioch. Zenobia was there in readiness to oppose his further progress. But the armies coming to an engagement at Daphne, near Antioch, she was defeated by the good conduct of Aurelian, and leaving Antioch at his mercy, retired with her army to Emisa. The Emperor marched immediately after, and found her ready to give him battle in the plains before the city. The dispute was sharp and bloody on both sides, till at last the victory inclined a second time to Aurelian; and the unfortunate Zenobia, not daring to confide in the Emisians, was again compelled to retire towards her capital, Palmyra. As the town was strongly fortified, and the inhabitants full of zeal for her service, and affection for her person, she made no doubt of defending herself here, in spite of the warmest efforts of Aurelian, till she could raise new forces, and venture again into the open field. Aurelian was not long behind, his activity impelled him forwards, to crown his former success, by completing the conquest of Zenobia. His march was terribly harassed by the frequent attacks of the Syrian banditti; and when he came up, he found Palmyra so strongly fortified and so bravely defended, that though he invested it with his army, yet the siege was attended with a thousand difficulties. His army was daily weakened and dispirited by the gallant resistance of the Palmyrenians, and his own life sometimes in the utmost danger. Tired at last with the obstinacy of the besieged, and almost worn out by continued fatigues, he sent Zenobia a written summons to surrender, as if his words could strike terror into her, whom by force of arms he was unable to subdue.

"AURELIAN, EMPEROR OF THE ROMAN WORLD, AND  
RECOVERER OF THE EAST, TO ZENOBIA AND HER  
ADHERENTS

"Why am I forced to command, what you ought voluntarily to have done already? I charge you to surrender, and thereby avoid the certain penalty of death, which otherwise attends you. You, Zenobia, shall spend the remainder of your life, where I, by the advice of the most honourable senate, shall think proper to place you. Your jewels, your silver, your gold, your finest apparel, your horses, and your camels, you shall resign to the disposal of the Romans, in order to preserve the Palmyrenians from being divested of all their former privileges."

Zenobia, not in the least affrighted by the menace, nor soothed by the cruel promise of a life in exile and obscurity; resolved by her answer to convince Aurelian, that he should find the stoutest resistance from her, whom he thought to frighten into compliance. This answer was drawn up by Longinus in a spirit peculiar to himself, and worthy of his mistress.

"ZENOBIA, QUEEN OF THE EAST, TO THE EMPEROR AURELIAN

"Never was such an unreasonable demand proposed, or such rigorous terms offered, by any but yourself. Remember, Aurelian, that in war, whatever is done, should be done by valour. You imperiously command me to surrender; but can you forget, that Cleopatra chose rather to die with the title of Queen, than to live in any inferior dignity? We expect succours from Persia; the Saracens are arming in our cause; even the Syrian banditti have already defeated your army. Judge what you are to expect from a conjunction of these forces. You shall be compelled to abate that pride, with which, as if you were absolute lord of the universe, you command me to become your captive."

Aurelian, says Vopiscus, had no sooner read this disdainful letter, than he blushed (not so much with shame, as) with indignation. He redoubled his efforts, invested the town more closely than ever, and kept it in continual alarms. No

art was left untried, which the conduct of a general could suggest, or the bravery of angry soldiers could put in execution. He intercepted the aid which was marching from Persia to its relief. He reduced the Saracen and Armenian forces, either by strength of arms, or the subtilty of intrigues; till at length, the Palmyrenians, deprived of all prospect of succour, and worn out by continual assaults from without, and by famine within, were obliged to open the gates and receive their conqueror. The Queen and Longinus could not tamely stay to put on their chains. Mounted on the swiftest camels, they endeavoured to fly into Persia, to make fresh head against Aurelian, who entering the city was vexed to find his victory imperfect, and Zenobia yet unsubdued. A body of the swiftest horse was immediately dispatched in pursuit, who overtook and made them prisoners as they were crossing the Euphrates. Aurelian, after he had settled Palmyra, returned to Emisa, whither the captives were carried after him. He sat on his tribunal to receive Zenobia, or rather to insult her. The Roman soldiers throng around her, and demand her death with incessant shouts. Zenobia now was no longer herself: the former greatness of her spirit quite sunk within her; she owned a master, and pleaded for her life. "Her counselors (she said) were to be blamed, and not herself. What could a weak short-sighted woman do, when beset by artful and ambitious men, who made her subservient to all their schemes? She never had aimed at empire, had they not placed it before her eyes in all its allurements. The letter which affronted Aurelian was not her own; Longinus wrote it, the insolence was his." This was no sooner heard, than Aurelian who was soldier enough to conquer, but not hero enough to forgive, poured all his vengeance on the head of Longinus. He was borne away to immediate execution, amidst the generous condolence of those who knew his merit, and admired the inward generosity of his soul. He pitied Zenobia, and comforted his friends. He looked upon death as a blessing, since it rescued his body from slavery, and gave his soul the most desirable freedom. "This world (said he with his expiring breath) is nothing but a prison; happy therefore he who gets soonest out of it, and gains his liberty."



The writings of Longinus are numerous, some on philosophical, but the greatest part on critical subjects. Dr. Pearce has collected the titles of twenty-five Treatises, none of which, except this on the Sublime, have escaped from the depredations of time and barbarians. And even this is rescued as from a wreck, damaged too much and shattered by the storm. Yet on this little and imperfect piece has the fame of Longinus been founded and erected. The learned and judicious have bestowed extraordinary commendation upon it. The Golden Treatise is its general title. It is one of those valuable remnants of antiquity, of which enough remains to engage our admiration, and excite an earnest regret for every particle of it that has perished. It resembles those mutilated statues, which are sometimes dugged out of ruins. Limbs are broken off, which it is not in the power of any living artist to replace, because the fine proportion and delicate finishing of the trunk excludes all hope of equalling such masterly performances. From a constant inspection and close study of such an antique fragment of Rome, Michael Angelo learned to execute and to teach the art of Sculpture; it was therefore called Michael Angelo's School. The same use may be made of this imperfect piece on the Sublime, since it is a noble school for critics, poets, orators, and historians.

"The Sublime," says Longinus, "is an image reflected from the inward greatness of the soul." The remark is refined and just; and who more deserving than he of its application? Let his sentiments be considered as reflections from his own mind; let this piece on the Sublime be regarded as the picture of its author. It is a pity we have not a larger portrait of him; but as that cannot be had, we must take up at present with this incomplete, though beautiful miniature. The features are graceful, the air is noble, the colouring lively enough to shew how fine it was, and how many qualifications are necessary to form the character of a critic with dignity and applause.

Elevation of thought, the greatest qualification requisite to an orator or poet, is equally necessary to a critic, and is the most shining talent in Longinus. Nature had implanted the seeds of it within him, which he himself improved and nursed up to perfection, by an intimacy with the greatest and sublim-



est writers. Whenever he has Homer in view, he catches his fire, and increases the light and ardour of it. The space between heaven and earth marks out the extent of the poet's genius; but the world itself seems too narrow a confinement for that of the critic.<sup>1</sup> And though his thoughts are sometimes stretched to an immeasurable size, yet they are always great without swelling, bold without rashness, far beyond what any other could or durst have said, and always proper and judicious.

As his sentiments are noble and lofty, so his style is masterly, enlivened by variety, and flexible with ease. There is no beauty pointed out by him in any other, which he does not imitate, and frequently excel, whilst he is making remarks upon it. How he admires and improves upon Homer, has been hinted already. When Plato is his subject, the words glide along in a smooth, easy, and peaceable flow. When he speaks of Hyperides, he copies at once his engaging manner, the simplicity, sweetness, and harmony of his style. With Demosthenes he is vehement, abrupt, and disorderly regular; he dazzles with his lightning, and terrifies with his thunder. When he parallels the Greek with the Roman orator, he shews in two periods the distinguishing excellences of each; the first is a very hurricane, which bears down all before it; the last, a conflagration, gentle in its beginning, gradually dispersed, increasing and getting to such a head, as to rage beyond resistance, and devour all things. His sense is everywhere the very thing he would express, and the sound of his words is an echo to his sense.

His judgment is exact and impartial, both in what he blames and what he commends. The sentence he pronounces is founded upon and supported by reasons which are satisfactory and just. His approbation is not attended with fits of stupid admiration, or gaping, like an idiot, at something surprising which he cannot comprehend; nor are his censures fretful and waspish. He stings, like the bee, what actually annoys him; but carries honey along with him, which, if it heals not the wound, yet assuages the smart.

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<sup>1</sup> See Sec. IX.

His candour is extensive as his judgment. The penetration of the one obliged him to reprove what was amiss; the secret workings of the other bias him to excuse or extenuate it in the best manner he is able. Whenever he lays open the faults of a writer, he forgets not to mention the qualities he had which were deserving of praise. Where Homer sinks into trifles, he cannot help reproving him; but though Homer nods sometimes, he is Homer still; excelling all the world when broad awake, and in his fits of drowsiness, dreaming like a god.

The good-nature, also of Longinus must not pass without notice. He bore an aversion to the sneers and cavils of those who, unequal to the weighty province of criticism, abuse it, and become its nuisance. He frequently takes pains to shew how misplaced their animadversions are, and to defend the injured from aspersions. There is an instance of this in his vindication of Theopompus from the censure of Cecilius.<sup>1</sup> He cannot endure to see what is right in that author perverted into error; nor where he really errs, will he suffer him to pass unproved.<sup>2</sup> Yet here his good-nature exerts itself again, and he proposes divers methods of amending what is wrong.

The judgment, and candour, and impartiality, with which Longinus declares his sentiments of the writings of others, will, I am persuaded, rise in our esteem, when we reflect on that exemplary piece of justice he has done to Moses. The manner of his quoting that celebrated passage<sup>3</sup> from him, is as honourable to the critic, as the quotation itself to the Jewish legislator. Whether he believed the Mosaic history of the creation, is a point in which we are not in the least concerned; but it was plainly his opinion, that though it be condescendingly suited to the finite conception of man, yet it is related in a manner not inconsistent with the majesty of God. To contend, as some do, that he never read Moses, is trifling, or rather litigious. The Greek translation had been dispersed throughout the Roman empire, long before the time in which he lived: and no man of a serious, much less of a philosophical turn, could reject it as unworthy a perusal. Besides, Zenobia, according to the testimony of Photius, was a Jewish convert. And I have

<sup>1</sup> Sect. xxxi.

<sup>2</sup> Sect. xliii.

<sup>3</sup> Sect. ix.

somewhere seen it mentioned from Bellarmine, that she was a Christian; but as I am a stranger to the reasons on which he founds the assertion, I shall lay no stress upon it.

But there is strong probability, that Longinus was not only acquainted with the writings of the Old Testament, but with those also of the New, since to a manuscript of the latter in the Vatican library, there is prefixed a passage from some of this Author's writings, which is preserved there as an instance of his judgment. He is drawing up a list of the greatest orators, and at the close he says, "And further, Paul of Tarsus, the chief supporter of an opinion not yet established." Fabricius, I own, has been so officiously kind as to attribute these words to Christian forgery; but for what reasons I cannot conjecture. If for any of real weight and importance, certainly he ought not to have concealed them from the world.

If Longinus ever saw any of the writings of St. Paul, he could not but entertain a high opinion of him. Such a judge must needs applaud so masterly an orator. For where is the writer that can vie with him in sublime and pathetic eloquence? Demosthenes could rouse up the Athenians against Philip, and Cicero strike shame and confusion into the breasts of Antony or Catiline; and did not the eloquence of St. Paul, though bound in degrading fetters, make the oppressive, the abandoned Felix tremble, and almost persuade Agrippa, in spite of all his prejudice, to be a Christian? Homer, after his death, was looked upon as more than human, and temples were erected to his honour; and was not St. Paul admired as a god, even whilst he was on earth, when the inhabitants of Lystra would have sacrificed to him? Let his writings be examined and judged by the severest test of the severest critics, and they cannot be found deficient; nay, they will appear more abundantly stocked with sublime and pathetic thoughts, with strong and beautiful figures, with nervous and elegant expressions, than any other composition in the world.

But, to leave this digression: it is a remark of Sir William Temple, that no pure Greek was written after the reign of the Antonini. But the diction of Longinus, though less pure than that of Aristotle, is elegant and nervous, the conciseness or diffuseness of his periods being always suited to the nature of his

subject. The terms he uses are generally so strong and expressive, and sometimes so artfully compounded, that they cannot be rendered into another language without wide circumlocution. He has a high and masculine turn of thought, unknown to any other writer, which enforced him to give all possible strength and energy to his words, that his language might be properly adjusted to his sense, and the sublimity of the latter be uniformly supported by the grandeur of the former.

But further, there appears not in him the least show or affectation of learning, though his stock was wonderfully large, yet without any prejudice to the brightness of his fancy. Some writers are even profuse of their commendations of him in this respect. For how extensive must his reading have been, to deserve those appellations given him by Eunapius, that he was a *living library*, and a *walking museum*? Large reading, without a due balance of judgment, is like a voracious appetite with a bad digestion; it breaks out according to the natural complexion of different persons, either into learned dulness, or a brisk but insipid pedantry. In Longinus, it was so far from palling or extinguishing, that on the contrary it sharpened and enlivened his taste. He was not so surly as to reject the sentiments of others without examination, but he had the wisdom to stick by his own.

Let us pause a little here, and consider what a disagreeable and shocking contrast there is between the genius, the taste, the candour, the good-nature, the generosity, and modesty of Longinus, and the heaviness, the dulness, the snarling and sneering temper of modern critics, who can feast on inadvertent slips, and triumph over what they think a blunder. *His* very rules are shining examples of what they inculcate; *his* remarks the very excellences he is pointing out. *Theirs* are often inversions of what is right, and sinking other men by clogging them with a weight of their own lead. *He* keeps the same majestic pace, or soars aloft with his authors; *they* are either creeping after, or plunging below them, fitted more by nature for heroes of a Dunciad, than for judges of fine sense and fine writing. The business of a critic is not only to find fault, nor to be all bitterness and gall. Yet such behaviour, in those who have usurped the name, has brought the office into



scandal and contempt. An *Essay on Criticism* appears but once in an age; and what a tedious interval is there between Longinus and Mr. Addison!

Having traced our Author thus far as a critic, we must view him now in another light, I mean as a Philosopher. In him these are not different, but mutually depending and co-existing parts of the same character. To judge in a worthy manner of the performances of men, we must know the dignity of human nature, the reach of the human understanding, the ends for which we were created, and the means of their attainment. In these speculations Longinus will make no contemptible figure, and I hope the view will not appear superfluous or useless.

Man cannot arrive to a just and proper understanding of himself, without worthy notions of the Supreme Being. The sad depravations of the pagan world are chiefly to be attributed to a deficiency in this respect. Homer has exalted his heroes at the expense of his deities, and sunken the divine nature far below the human; and therefore deserves that censure of blasphemy which Longinus has passed upon him. Had the poet designed to have turned the imaginary gods of his idolatrous countrymen into ridicule, he could hardly have taken a better method. Yet what he has said has never been understood in that light; and though the whole may be allegorical, as his commentators would fain persuade us, yet this will be no excuse for the malignancy of its effects on a superstitious world. The discourses of Socrates, and the writings of Plato, had in a great measure corrected the notions of inquisitive and thoughtful men in this particular, and caused the distinction of religion into vulgar and philosophical. By what Longinus has said of Homer, it is plain to me, that his religion was of the latter sort. Though we allow him not to be a Christian or a Jewish convert, yet he was no idolater, since without a knowledge and reverence of the Divine perfections, he never could have formed his noble ideas of human nature.

This life he considers as a public theatre, on which men are to act their parts. A thirst after glory, and an emulation of whatever is great and excellent, is implanted in their minds, to quicken their pursuits after real grandeur, and to enable them to approach, as near as their finite abilities will



admit, to Divinity itself. Upon these principles, he accounts for the vast stretch and penetration of the human understanding; to these he ascribes the labours of men of genius; and by the predominancy of them in their minds, ascertains the success of their attempts. In the same manner he accounts for that turn in the mind, which biasses us to admire more what is great and uncommon, than what is ordinary and familiar, however useful. There are other masterly reflections of this kind in the 33d and 34th Sections, which are only to be excelled by Mr. Addison's Essay on the Imagination. Whoever reads this part of Longinus, and that piece of Mr. Addison's with attention, will form notions of them both very much to their honour.

Yet telling us we were born to pursue what is great, without informing us what is so, would avail but little. Longinus declares for a close and attentive examination of all things. Outsides and surfaces may be splendid and alluring, yet nothing be within deserving our applause. He that suffers himself to be dazzled with a gay and gaudy appearance, will be betrayed into admiration of what the wise contemn; his pursuits will be levelled at wealth, and power, and high rank in life, to the prejudice of his inward tranquillity, and perhaps the wreck of his virtue. The pageantry and pomp of life will be regarded by such a person as true honour and glory; and he will neglect the nobler acquisitions, which are more suited to the dignity of his nature, which alone can give merit to ambition, and centre in solid and substantial grandeur.

The mind is the source and standard of whatever can be considered as great and illustrious in any light. From this our actions and our words must flow, and by this must they be weighed. We must think well, before we can act or speak as we ought. And it is the inward vigour of the soul, though variously exerted, which forms the patriot, the philosopher, the orator, or the poet: this was the rise of an Alexander, a Socrates, a Demosthenes, and a Homer. Yet this inward vigour is chiefly owing to the bounty of nature, is cherished and improved by education, but cannot reach maturity without other concurrent causes, such as public liberty, and the strictest practice of virtue.

That the seeds of a great genius in any kind must be implanted within, and cherished and improved by education, are points in which the whole world agrees. But the importance of liberty in bringing it to perfection, may perhaps be more liable to debate. Longinus is clear on the affirmative side. He speaks feelingly, but with caution about it, because tyranny and oppression were triumphant at the time he wrote.

He avers, with a spirit of generous indignation, that slavery is the confinement of the soul, and a public dungeon.<sup>1</sup> On this he charges the suppression of genius and decay of the sublime. The condition of man is deplorable when he dares not exert his abilities, and runs into imminent danger by saying or doing what he ought. Tyranny, erected on the ruins of liberty, lays an immediate restraint on the minds of vassals, so that the inborn fire of genius is quickly damped, and suffers at last total extinction. This must always be a necessary consequence, when what ought to be the reward of an honourable ambition becomes the prey of knaves and flatterers. But the infection gradually spreads, and fear and avarice will bend those to it, whom nature formed for higher employments, and sink lofty orators into pompous flatterers. The truth of this remark will easily appear, if we compare Cicero speaking to Catiline, to the same Cicero pleading before Cæsar for Marcellus. That spirit of adulation, which prevailed so much in England about a century ago, lowered one of the greatest geniuses that ever lived, and turned even the Lord Bacon into a sycophant. And this will be the case wherever power encroaches on the rights of mankind: a servile fear will clog and fetter every rising genius, will strike such an awe upon it in its tender and infant state, as will stick for ever after, and check its generous sallies. No one will write or speak well in such a situation, unless on subjects of mere amusement, and which cannot, by any indirect tendency, affect his masters. For how shall the vassal dare to talk sublimely on any point wherein his lord acts meanly?

But further, as despotic and unbridled power is generally

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<sup>1</sup> Sect. xlv.

obtained, so it is as often supported by unjustifiable methods. The splendid and ostentatious pageantry of those at the helm, gives rise to luxury and profuseness among the subjects. These are the fatal sources of dissolute manners, of degenerate sentiments, of infamy and want. As pleasure is supplied by money, no method, however mean, is omitted to procure the latter, because it leads to the enjoyment of the former. Men become corrupt and abject, their minds are enervated and insensible to shame. "The faculties of the soul (in the words of Longinus)<sup>1</sup> will then grow stupid, their spirit will be lost, and good sense and genius must lay in ruins, when the care and study of man is engaged about the mortal, the worthless part of himself, and he has ceased to cultivate virtue, and polish his nobler part, the soul."

The scope of our Author's reflections in the latter part of the Section is this; that genius can never exert itself, or rise to sublimity, where virtue is neglected, and the morals are depraved. Cicero was of the same opinion before him, and Quintilian has a whole chapter to prove that the great orator must be a good man. Men of the finest genius, who have hitherto appeared in the world, have been for the most part not very defective in their morals, and less in their principles. I am sensible there are exceptions to this observation, but little to the credit of the persons, since their works become the severest satires on themselves, and the manifest opposition between their thoughts and practice detracts its weight from the one, and marks out the other for public abhorrence.

An inward grandeur of soul is the common centre, from whence every ray of sublimity, either in thought, or action, or discourse, is darted out. For all minds are no more of the same complexion, than all bodies of the same texture. In the latter case, our eyes would meet only with the same uniformity of colour in every object: in the former, we should be all orators or poets, all philosophers, or all block-heads. This would break in upon that beautiful and useful variety, with which the Author of nature has adorned the

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<sup>1</sup> Sect. xlv.

rational as well as the material creation. There is in every mind a tendency, though perhaps differently inclined, to what is great and excellent. Happy they, who know their own peculiar bent, who have been blessed with opportunities of giving it the proper culture and polish, and are not cramped or restrained in the liberty of shewing and declaring it to others! There are many fortunate concurrences, without which we cannot attain to any quickness of taste or relish for the Sublime.

I hope what has been said will not be thought an improper introduction to the following Treatise, in which (unless I am deceived) there is a just foundation for every remark that has been made. The Author appears sublime in every view, not only in what he has written, but in the manner in which he acted, and the bravery with which he died; by all acknowledged the Prince of Critics, and by no worse judge than Boileau esteemed a philosopher, worthy to be ranked with Socrates and Cato.

# LONGINUS

## ON THE SUBLIME

### SECTION I

You remember, my dear <sup>1</sup>TERENTIANUS, that when we read over together <sup>2</sup>Cecilius's Treatise on the Sublime, we thought it too mean for a subject of that nature, that it is entirely defective in its principal branches, and that consequently its advantage (which ought to be the principal aim of every writer) would prove very small to the readers. Besides, though in every treatise upon any science two points are indispensably required; the first, that the science, which is the subject of it, be fully explained; the second (I mean in order of writing, since in excellence it is far the superior), that plain directions be given, how and by what method such science may be attained; yet Cecilius, who brings a thousand instances to shew what the Sublime is, as if his readers were wholly ignorant of the matter, has omitted, as altogether unnecessary, the method which, judiciously observed, might enable us to raise our natural genius to any height of this SUBLIME. But, perhaps, this writer is not so much to be blamed for his omissions, as commended for his good designs and earnest endeavours. You indeed have laid your commands upon me, to give you my thoughts on this Sublime; let us then, in obedience to those commands, con-

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<sup>1</sup> Who this Terentianus, or Posthumius Terentianus, was, to whom the Author addresses this Treatise, is not possible to be discovered, nor is it of any great importance. But it appears, from some passages in the sequel of this work, that he was a young Roman, a person of a bright genius, an elegant taste, and a particular friend to Longinus.

<sup>2</sup> Cecilius was a Sicilian rhetorician. He lived under Augustus, and was contemporary with Dionysius of Halicarnassus, with whom he contracted a very close friendship. He is thought to have been the first who wrote on the Sublime.



sider whether any thing can be drawn from my private studies, for the service of those who write for the world, or speak in public.

But I request you, my dear friend, to give me your opinion on whatever I advance, with that exactness, which is due to truth, and that sincerity which is natural to yourself. For well did the 'sage answer the question, "In what do we most resemble the gods?" when he replied, "In doing good and speaking truth." But since I write, my dear friend, to you, who are versed in every branch of polite learning, there will be little occasion to use many previous words in proving, that the Sublime is a certain eminence or perfection of language, and that the greatest writers, both in verse and prose, have by this alone obtained the prize of glory, and filled all time with their renown. For the Sublime not only persuades, but even throws an audience into transport. The Marvellous always works with more surprising force than that which barely persuades or delights. In most cases, it is wholly in our own power either to resist or yield to persuasion. But the Sublime, endued with strength irresistible, strikes home, and triumphs over every hearer. Dexterity of invention, and good order and economy in composition, are not to be discerned from one or two passages, nor scarcely sometimes from the whole texture of a discourse; but the Sublime, when seasonably addressed, with the rapid force of lightning has borne down all before it, and shewn at one stroke the compacted might of genius. But these, and truths like these, so well known and familiar to himself, I am confident my dear TERENCE can undeniably prove by his own practice.

## SECTION II

But we ought not to advance, before we clear the point, whether or no there be any art in the Sublime. For some are entirely of opinion, that they are guilty of a great mistake, who would reduce it to the rules of art. "The Sublime (say they) is born within us, and is not to be learned by precept. The only art to reach it, is, to have the power from nature. And (as

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<sup>1</sup> Pythagoras.

they reason) those effects, which should be purely natural, are dispirited and weakened by the dry impoverishing rules of art."

But I maintain, that the contrary might easily appear, would they only reflect that—though nature for the most part challenges a sovereign and uncontrollable power in the Pathetic and Sublime, yet she is not altogether lawless, but delights in a proper regulation. That again—though she is the foundation, and even the source of all degrees of the Sublime, yet that method is able to point out in the clearest manner the peculiar tendencies of each, and to mark the proper seasons in which they ought to be enforced and applied. And further—that flights of grandeur are then in the utmost danger, when left at random to themselves, having no ballast properly to poise, no helm to guide their course, but cumbered with their own weight, and bold without discretion. Genius may sometimes want the spur, but it stands as frequently in need of the curb.

Demosthenes somewhere judiciously observes, "That in common life success is the greatest good; that the next, and no less important, is conduct, without which the other must be unavoidably of short continuance." Now the same may be asserted of Composition, where nature will supply the place of success, and art the place of conduct.

But further, there is one thing which deserves particular attention. For though it must be owned, that there is a force in eloquence, which depends not upon, nor can be learned by, rule, yet even this could not be known without that light which we receive from art. If, therefore, as I said before, he who condemns such works as this in which I am now engaged, would attend to these reflections, I have very good reason to believe he would no longer think any undertaking of this nature superfluous or useless.

## SECTION III

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Let them the chimney's flashing flames repel.  
 Could but these eyes one lurking wretch arrest,  
 I'd whirl aloft one streaming curl of flame,  
 And into embers turn his crackling dome.  
 But now a generous song I have not sounded.

*Streaming curls of flame, speeding against heaven, and making Boreas a piper*, with such-like expressions, are not tragical, but super-tragical. For those forced and unnatural images corrupt and debase the style, and cannot possibly adorn or raise it; and whenever carefully examined in the light, their show of being terrible gradually disappears, and they become contemptible and ridiculous. Tragedy will indeed by its nature admit of some pompous and magnificent swellings, yet even in tragedy it is an unpardonable offence to soar too high; much less allowable must it therefore be in prose-writing, or those works which are founded in truth. Upon this account some expressions of <sup>1</sup>Gorgias the Leontine are highly ridiculed, who styles Xerxes the Persian Jupiter, and calls vultures *living sepulchres*. Some expressions of <sup>2</sup>Callisthenes deserve the same treatment, for they shine not like stars, but glare like meteors. And <sup>3</sup>Clitarchus comes under this censure still more, who blusters indeed, and blows, as Sophocles expresses it,

Loud sounding blasts not sweetened by the stop.

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<sup>1</sup> Gorgias the Leontine, or of Leontium, was a Sicilian rhetorician, and father of the Sophists. He was in such universal esteem throughout Greece, that a statue was erected to his honour in the temple of Apollo at Delphos, of solid gold, though the custom had been only to gild them. His styling Xerxes the Persian Jupiter, it is thought, may be defended from the custom of the Persians to salute their monarch by that high title. Calling vultures *living sepulchres*, has been more severely censured by Hermogenes than Longinus. The authors of such quaint expressions (as he says) deserve themselves to be buried in such tombs.

<sup>2</sup> Callisthenes succeeded Aristotle in the tuition of Alexander the Great, and wrote a history of the affairs of Greece.

<sup>3</sup> Clitarchus wrote an account of the exploits of Alexander the Great,

<sup>1</sup>Amphicrates, <sup>2</sup>Hegesias, and <sup>3</sup>Matris, may all be taxed with the same imperfections. For often, when, in their own opinion, they are all Divine, what they imagine to be godlike spirit, proves empty simple froth.

Bombast however is amongst those faults which are most difficult to be avoided. All men are naturally biassed to aim at grandeur. Hence it is, that by shunning with the utmost diligence the censure of impotence and phlegm, they are hurried into the contrary extreme. They are mindful of the maxim, that

In great attempts 'tis glorious ev'n to fall.

But tumours in writing, as well as in the human body, are certain disorders. Empty and veiled over with superficial bigness, they only delude, and work effects contrary to those for

having attended him in his expeditions. Demetrius Phalereus, in his treatise on Elocution, has censured his swelling description of a wasp. "It feeds (says he) upon the mountains, and flies into hollow oaks." It seems as if he was speaking of a wild bull, or the boar of Erymanthus, and not of such a pitiful creature as a wasp. And for this reason, says Demetrius, the description is cold and disagreeable.

<sup>1</sup> Amphicrates was an Athenian orator. Being banished to Seleucia, and requested to set up a school there, he replied, with arrogance and disdain, that "The dish was not large enough for dolphins."

<sup>2</sup> Hegesias was a Magnesian. Cicero, in his Orator, c. 226, says humorously of him, "He is faulty no less in his thoughts than his expressions, so that no one who has any knowledge of him need ever be at a loss for a man to call *impertinent*." One of his frigid expressions is still remaining. Alexander was born the same night that the temple of Diana at Ephesus, the finest edifice in the world, was by a terrible fire reduced to ashes. Hegesias, in a panegyric declamation on Alexander the Great, attempted thus to turn that accident to his honour: "No wonder (said he) that Diana's temple was consumed by so terrible a conflagration: the goddess was so taken up in assisting at Olinthia's delivery of Alexander, that she had no leisure to extinguish the flames which were destroying her temple." "The coldness of this expression (says Plutarch in Alex.) is so excessively great, that it seems sufficient of itself to have extinguished the fire of the temple."

<sup>3</sup> Who Matris was I cannot find, but commentators observe from Athenæus, that he wrote in prose an Encomium upon Hercules.



which they were designed. "Nothing," according to the old saying, "is drier than a person distempered with the dropsy."

Now the only failure in this swollen and puffed-up style is, that it endeavours to go beyond the true Sublime, whereas Puerilities are directly opposite to it. They are low and grovelling, meanly and faintly expressed, and in a word are the most ungenerous and unpardonable errors that an author can be guilty of.

But what do we mean by a Puerility? Why, it is certainly no more than a schoolboy's thought, which, by too eager a pursuit of elegance, becomes dry and insipid. And those persons commonly fail in this particular, who, by an ill-managed zeal for a neat, correct, and, above all, a sweet style, are hurried into low turns of expression, into a heavy and nauseous affectation.

To these may be added a third sort of imperfection in the Pathetic, which THEODORUS<sup>1</sup> has named the *Parenthyrse*, or an ill-timed emotion. It is an unnecessary attempt to work upon the passions, where there is no need of a *Pathos*; or some excess, where moderation is requisite. For several authors, of no sober understandings, are excessively fond of passionate expressions, which bear no relation at all to their subject, but are whims of their own, or borrowed from the schools. The consequence is, they meet with nothing but contempt and derision from their unaffected audience. And it is what they deserve, since they force themselves into transport and emotion, whilst their audience is calm, sedate, and unmoved. But I must reserve the Pathetic for another place.

#### SECTION IV

<sup>2</sup>TIMÆUS abounds very much in the Frigid, the other vice of which I am speaking: a writer, it is true, sufficiently

<sup>1</sup>Theodorus is thought to have been born at Gadara, and to have taught at Rhodes. Tiberius Cæsar, according to Quintilian, is reported to have heard him with application, during his retirement in that island.

<sup>2</sup>Timæus was a Sicilian historian. Cicero has sketched a short character of him in his *Orator*, l. 2. c. 14, which agrees very well with the favourable part of that which is drawn in this Section. But



skilled in other points, and who sometimes reaches the genuine Sublime. He was indeed a person of a ready invention, polite learning, and a great fertility and strength of thought. But these qualifications are, in a great measure, clouded by the propensity he has to blazon the imperfections of others, and a wilful blindness in regard to his own; though a fond desire of new thoughts and uncommon turns has often plunged him into shameful Puerilities. The truth of these assertions I shall confirm by one or two instances alone, since Cecilius has already given us a larger number.

When he commends Alexander the Great, he tells us, "that he conquered all Asia in fewer years than Isocrates was composing his Panegyric." A wonderful parallel indeed, between the conqueror of the world and a professor of rhetoric! By your method of computation, Timæus, the Lacedemonians fall vastly short of Isocrates, in expedition; for they spent thirty years in the siege of Messene, he only ten in writing that Panegyric!

But how does he inveigh against those Athenians who were made prisoners after the defeat in Sicily! "Guilty (says he) of sacrilege against Hermes, and having defaced his images, they were now severely punished; and what is somewhat extraordinary, by Hermocrates the son of Hermon, who was paternally descended from the injured deity." Really, my TERENTIANUS, I am surprised that he has not passed the same censure on Dionysius the tyrant; "who, for his heinous impiety towards Jupiter (or Dia) and Hercules (Heraclea), was dethroned by Dion and Heraclides."

Why should I dwell any longer upon Timæus, when even the very heroes of good writing, Xenophon and Plato, though educated in the school of Socrates, sometimes forget themselves, and transgress through an affectation of such pretty flourishes? The former, in his Polity of the Lacedemonians, speaks thus: "They observe an uninterrupted silence, and keep their eyes as fixed and unmoved, as if they were so

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Longinus takes notice further of his severity to others, which even drew upon him the surname of Epitimæus, from the Greek *epitiman*, to blame, because he was continually chiding and finding fault.

many statues of stone or brass. You might with reason think them more modest than the virgins in their eyes."<sup>1</sup>

Amphicrates might perhaps be allowed to use the term of *modest virgins* for the *pupils of the eye*; but what an indecency is it in the great Xenophon? And what a strange persuasion, that the pupils of the eye should be in general the seats of modesty, when impudence is no where more visible than in the eyes of some? Homer, for instance, calls a person,

Drunkard! thou dog in eye!<sup>2</sup>

Timæus, as if he had found a treasure, could not pass by this insipid turn of Xenophon without imitation. Accordingly he speaks thus of Agathocles: "He ravished his own cousin, though married to another person, and on <sup>3</sup>the very day when she was first seen by her husband without a veil, a crime, of which none but he who had prostitutes, not virgins, in his eyes, could be guilty." Neither is the divine Plato to be acquitted of this failure, when he says, for instance; "After they are written, they deposit in the temples these cypress memorials." And in another passage; "As to the walls, Megillus, I join in the opinion of Sparta, to let them sleep supine on the earth, and not to rouse them

<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly that turn upon the word *kōre*, meaning both girl and pupil of the eye, here blamed by Longinus, would be a great blemish to this fine piece, if it were justly chargeable on the author. But Longinus must needs have made use of a very incorrect copy, which, by an unpardonable blunder, had *ōphthalmois*, eyes, instead of *thalamōis*, bridal beds, as it stands now in the best editions. This quite removes the cold and insipid turn, and restores a sense which is worthy of Xenophon: "You would think them more modest in their whole behaviour, than virgins in the bridal bed."

<sup>2</sup> Iliad ii, v. 225.

<sup>3</sup> It was the custom throughout Greece, and the Grecian colonies, for the unmarried women never to appear in public, or to converse with men, without a veil. The second or third day after marriage, it was usual for the bridegroom to make presents to his bride, which were called *anakalupteria*, unveiling gifts, for then she immediately unveiled, and liberty was given him to converse freely with her ever after.

up." Neither does an expression of Herodotus fall short of it, when he calls beautiful women, "the pains of the eye."<sup>1</sup> Though this indeed may admit of some excuse, since in his history it is spoken by drunken barbarians. But neither in such a case, is it prudent to hazard the censure of posterity, rather than pass over a pretty conceit.

## SECTION V

ALL these and such-like indecencies in composition take their rise from the same original; I mean that eager pursuit of uncommon turns of thought, which almost infatuates the writers of the present age. For our excellences and defects flow almost from the same common source. So that those correct and elegant, those pompous and beautiful expressions, of which good writing chiefly consists, are frequently so distorted as to become the unlucky causes and foundations of opposite blemishes. This is manifest in hyperboles and plurals; but the danger attending an injudicious use of these figures, I shall discover in the sequel of this work. At present it is incumbent upon me to inquire, by what means we may be enabled to avoid those vices, which border so near upon, and are so easily blended with, the true Sublime.

## SECTION VI

THIS indeed may be easily learned, if we can gain a thorough insight and penetration into the nature of the true Sublime, which, to speak truly, is by no means an easy, or a ready acquisition. To pass a right judgment upon composition is generally the effect of a long experience, and the last improvement of study and observation. But however, to speak in the way of encouragement, a more expeditious method to form our taste, may perhaps, by the assistance of Rules, be successfully attempted.

<sup>1</sup> The critics are strangely divided about the justice of this remark. Authorities are urged, and parallel expressions quoted on both sides. Longinus blames it, but afterwards candidly alleges the only plea which can be urged in its favour, that it was said by drunken barbarians.

## SECTION VII

You cannot be ignorant, my dearest friend, that in common life there is nothing great, a contempt of which shews a greatness of soul. So riches, honours, titles, crowns, and whatever is veiled over with a theatrical splendour, and a gaudy outside, can never be regarded as intrinsically good, in the opinion of a wise man, since by despising such things no little glory is acquired. For the persons who have ability sufficient to acquire, but through an inward generosity scorn such acquisitions, are more admired than those who actually possess them.

In the same manner we must judge of whatever looks great both in poetry and prose. We must carefully examine whether it be not only appearance. We must divest it of all superficial pomp and garnish. If it cannot stand this trial, without doubt it is only swelled and puffed up, and it will be more for our honour to condemn than to admire it. For the mind is naturally elevated by the true Sublime, and so sensibly affected with its lively strokes, that it swells in transport and an inward pride, as if what was only heard had been the product of its own invention.

He therefore who has a competent share of natural and acquired taste, may easily discover the value of any performance from a bare recital of it. If he finds that it transports not his soul, nor exalts his thoughts; that it calls not up into his mind ideas more enlarged than what the mere sounds of the words convey, but on attentive examination its dignity lessens and declines; he may conclude, that whatever pierces no deeper than the ears, can never be the true Sublime. That on the contrary is grand and lofty, which the more we consider, the greater ideas we conceive of it; whose force we cannot possibly withstand; which immediately sinks deep, and makes such impressions on the mind as cannot be easily worn out or effaced. In a word, you may pronounce that sublime, beautiful, and genuine, which always pleases, and takes equally with all sorts of men. For when persons of different humours, ages, professions, and inclinations, agree in the same joint approbation of any performance; then this



union of assent, this combination of so many different judgments, stamps a high and indisputable value on that performance, which meets with such general applause.

### SECTION VIII.

THERE are, if I may so express it, five very copious sources of the Sublime, if we presuppose an ability of speaking well, as a common foundation for these five sorts, and indeed without it, any thing besides will avail but little.

I. The *first* and most excellent of these is a boldness and grandeur in the Thoughts, as I have shewn in my Essay on Xenophon.

II. The *second* is called the Pathetic, or the power of raising the passions to a violent and even enthusiastic degree; and these two being genuine constituents of the Sublime, are the gifts of nature, whereas the other sorts depend in some measure upon art.

III. The *third* consists in a skilful application of Figures, which are twofold, of sentiment and language.

IV. The *fourth* is a noble and graceful manner of Expression, which is not only to choose out significant and elegant words, but also to adorn and embellish the style, by the assistance of Tropes.

V. The *fifth* source of the Sublime, which completes all the preceding, is the Structure or composition of all the periods, in all possible dignity and grandeur.

I proceed next to consider each of these sources apart; but must first observe, that, of the *five*, Cecilius has wholly admitted the Pathetic. Now, if he looked upon the Grand and Pathetic as including one another, and in effect the same, he was under a mistake. For some passions are vastly distant from grandeur, and are in themselves of a low degree; as lamentation, sorrow, fear; and on the contrary, there are many things grand and lofty without any passion; as, among a thousand instances, we may see, from what the poet [Homer] has said, with so much boldness, of the Aloidess:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Odyssey xi, v. 314.



——— to raise

Huge Ossa on Olympus' top they strove,  
And place on Ossa Pelion with its grove;  
That heaven itself, thus climb'd, might be assail'd.

But the boldness of what he afterwards adds is yet greater:

Nor would success their bold attempts have fail'd, &c.

Among the orators, all panegyrics, and orations composed for pomp and show, may be grand throughout, but yet are for the most part void of passion. So that those orators, who excel in the Pathetic, scarcely ever succeed as panegyrists; and those whose talents lie chiefly at Panegyric, are very seldom able to affect the passions. But, on the other hand, if Cecilius was of opinion, that the Pathetic did not contribute to the Sublime, and on that account judged it not worth his mention, he is guilty of an unpardonable error. For I confidently aver, that nothing so much raises discourse, as a fine pathos seasonably applied. It animates a whole performance with uncommon life and spirit, and gives mere words the force (as it were) of inspiration.

## PART II

### SECTION IX

BUT though the first and most important of these divisions, I mean, Elevation of Thought, be rather a natural than an acquired qualification, yet we ought to spare no pains to educate our souls to grandeur, and impregnate them with generous and enlarged ideas.

"But how," it will be asked, "can this be done?" Why, I have hinted in another place, that the Sublime is an image reflected from the inward greatness of the soul. Hence it comes to pass, that a naked thought without words challenges admiration, and strikes by its grandeur. Such is the silence of Ajax in the Odyssey, which is undoubtedly noble, and far above expression.

To arrive at excellence like this, we must needs suppose that which is the cause of it; I mean, that an orator of the true

genius must have no mean and ungenerous way of thinking. For it is impossible for those who have grovelling and servile ideas, or are engaged in the sordid pursuits of life, to produce any thing worthy of admiration, and the perusal of all posterity. Grand and sublime expressions must flow from them and them alone, whose conceptions are stored and big with greatness. And hence it is, that the greatest thoughts are always uttered by the greatest souls. When Parmenio cried, "I would accept these proposals, if I was Alexander;" Alexander made this noble reply, "And so would I, if I was Parmenio." His answer shewed the greatness of his mind.

So the space between heaven and earth marks out the vast reach and capacity of Homer's ideas, when he says,<sup>1</sup>

While scarce the skies her horrid head can bound,  
She stalks on earth.—*Mr. Pope.*

This description may with more justice be applied to Homer's genius than the extent of discord.

But what disparity, what a fall there is in Hesiod's description of melancholy, if the poem of the Shield may be ascribed to him!

A filthy moisture from her nostrils flow'd.

He has not represented his image terrible, but loathsome and nauseous.

On the other hand, with what majesty and pomp does Homer exalt his deities!

Far as a shepherd from some point on high  
O'er the wide main extends his boundless eye,  
Through such a space of air, with thund'ring sound,  
At one long leap th' immortal coursers bound.<sup>3</sup>

—*Mr. Pope.*

<sup>1</sup> There is a great gap in the original after these words. The sense has been supplied by the editors, from the well-known records of history. The proposals here mentioned were made to Alexander by Darius; and were no less than his own daughter, and half his kingdom, to purchase peace. They would have contented Parmenio, but were quite too small for the extensive views of his master.

<sup>2</sup> Iliad iv, v. 443.

Iliad v, v. 770.

He measures the leap of the horses by the extent of the world. And who is there, that, considering the superlative magnificence of this thought, would not with good reason cry out, that "if the steeds of the Deity were to take a second leap, the world itself would want room for it!"

How grand also and pompous are those descriptions of the combat of the gods!

Heav'n in loud thunders bids the trumpet sound,  
And wide beneath them groans the rending ground.<sup>1</sup>  
Deep in the dismal regions of the dead  
Th' infernal monarch rear'd his horrid head;

Leap'd from his throne, lest Neptune's arm should lay  
His dark dominions open to the day,  
And pour in light on Pluto's drear abodes,  
Abhor'd by men, and dreadful ev'n to gods.<sup>2</sup>

—*Mr. Pope.*

What a prospect is here, my friend! The earth laid open to its centre; Tartarus itself disclosed to view; the whole world in commotion, and tottering on its basis! and what is more, heaven and hell, things mortal and immortal, all combating together, and sharing the danger of this important battle! But yet, these bold representations, if not allegorically understood, are downright blasphemy, and extravagantly shocking.<sup>3</sup> For Homer, in my opinion, when he gives us a detail of the wounds, the seditions, the punishments, imprisonments, tears of the deities, with those evils of every kind under which they languish, has to the utmost of his power exalted his heroes, who fought at Troy, into gods, and degraded his gods into men. Nay, he makes their condition worse than human; for when man is

<sup>1</sup> Iliad xxi, v. 388.

<sup>2</sup> Iliad xx, v. 61.

<sup>3</sup> Plutarch, in his treatise On Reading the Poets, is of the same opinion with Longinus: "When you read (says he) in Homer, of gods thrown out of heaven by one another, or of gods wounded by, quarrelling with, and snarling at, one another, you may with reason say,

Here had thy fancy glow'd with usual heat,  
Thy gods had shone more uniformly great."

overwhelmed in misfortunes, death affords a comfortable port, and rescues him from misery. But he represents the infelicity of the gods as everlasting as their nature.

And how far does he excel those descriptions of the combats of the gods, when he sets a deity in his true light, and paints him in all his majesty, grandeur, and perfection; as in that description of Neptune, which has been already applauded by several writers:

Fierce as he pass'd the lofty mountains nod,  
The forests shake, earth trembled as he trod,  
And felt the footsteps of th' immortal god.  
His whirling wheels the glassy surface sweep;  
Th' enormous monsters rolling o'er the deep,  
Gambol around him on the wat'ry way,  
And heavy whales in awkward measures play;  
The sea subsiding spreads a level plain,  
Exults and owns the monarch of the main:  
The parting waves before his coursers fly;  
The wond'ring waters leave the axle dry.<sup>1</sup>

—*Mr. Pope.*

<sup>2</sup>So likewise the Jewish legislator, no ordinary person, having

<sup>1</sup> *Iliad*. iii. ver. 18—27.

<sup>2</sup> This Divine passage has furnished a handle for many of those who are willing to be thought critics, to shew their pertness and stupidity at once. Though bright as the light of which it speaks, they are blind to its lustre, and will not discern its Sublimity. Some pretend that Longinus never saw this passage, though he has actually quoted it; and that he never read Moses, though he has left so candid an acknowledgment of his merit. In such company, some, no doubt, will be surprised to find the names of Huet and Le Clerc. They have examined, taken to pieces, and sifted it as long as they were able, yet still they cannot find it Sublime. It is simple, say they, and therefore not grand. They have tried it by a law of Horace misunderstood, and therefore condemn it.

Boileau undertook its defence, and has gallantly performed it. He shews them, that Simplicity of expression is so far from being opposed to Sublimity, that it is frequently the cause and foundation of it; (and indeed there is not a page in Scripture which abounds not with instances to strengthen this remark.) Horace's law, that a *beginning should be unadorned*, does not by any means forbid it to

conceived a just idea of the power of God, has nobly expressed it in the beginning of his Law.<sup>1</sup> "And God said,—*What?*—Let there be light, and there was light. Let the earth be, and the earth was."

I hope my friend will not think me tedious, if I add another quotation from the poet, in regard to his mortals; that you may see how he accustoms us to mount along with him to heroic grandeur. A thick and impenetrable cloud of darkness had on a sudden enveloped the Grecian army, and suspended the battle. Ajax, perplexed what course to take, prays thus:<sup>2</sup>

Accept a warrior's pray'r, eternal Jove;  
This cloud of darkness from the Greeks remove;  
Give us but light, and let us see our foes,  
We'll bravely fall, though Jove himself oppose.

The sentiments of Ajax are here pathetically expressed: it is Ajax himself. He begs not for life; a request like that would be beneath a hero. But because in that darkness he could display his valour in no illustrious exploit, and his great heart was unable to brook a sluggish inactivity in the field of action, he only prays for light, not doubting to crown his fall with some notable performance, though Jove himself should oppose his efforts. Here Homer, like a brisk and favourable gale,

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be grand, since grandeur consists not in ornament and dress. He then shews at large, that whatever noble and majestic expression, elevation of thought, and importance of event, can contribute to Sublimity, may be found united in this passage.

It is however remarkable, that though Monsieur Huet will not allow the Sublimity of this passage in Moses, yet he extols the following in the 33d Psalm: "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."

There is a particularity in the manner of quoting this passage by Longinus, which I think has hitherto escaped observation. "God said—*What?*—Let there be light," &c. That interrogation between the narrative part and the words of the Almighty himself, carries with it an air of reverence and veneration. It seems designed to awaken the reader, and raise his awful attention to the voice of the great Creator.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Iliad xvii, ver. 645.



renews and swells the fury of the battle; he is as warm and impetuous as his heroes are, or (as he says of Hector)

With such a furious rage his steps advance,  
As when the god of battles shakes his lance,  
Or baleful flames on some thick forest cast,  
Swift marching lay the wooded mountain waste:  
Around his mouth a foamy moisture stands.<sup>1</sup>

Yet Homer himself shews in the *Odyssey* (what I am going to add is necessary on several accounts), that when a great genius is in decline, a fondness for the fabulous clings fast to age. Many arguments may be brought to prove that this poem was written after the *Iliad*; but this especially, that in the *Odyssey* he has occasionally mentioned the sequel of those calamities, which began at Troy, as so many episodes of that fatal war; and that he introduces those terrible dangers and horrid disasters, as formerly undergone by his heroes. For, in reality, the *Odyssey* is no more than the epilogue of the *Iliad*:

There warlike Ajax, there Achilles lies,  
Patroclus there, a man divinely wise;  
There too my dearest son.<sup>2</sup>

It proceeds, I suppose, from the same reason, that having written the *Iliad* in the youth and vigour of his genius, he has furnished it with continued scenes of action and combat; whereas the greatest part of the *Odyssey* is spent in narration, the delight of old age. So that, in the *Odyssey*, Homer may with justice be resembled to the setting sun, whose grandeur still remains, without the meridian heat of his beams. The style is not so grand and majestic as that of the *Iliad*; the sublimity not continued with so much spirit, nor so uniformly noble; the tides of passion flow not along with so much profusion, nor do they hurry away the reader in so rapid a current. There is not the same volubility and quick variation of the phrase; nor is the work embellished with so many strong and expressive images. Yet, like the ocean, whose very shores, when deserted by the tide, mark out how wide it sometimes

<sup>1</sup> *Iliad* xv, ver. 605.

<sup>2</sup> *Odyssey* iii, ver. 109.

flows, so Homer's genius, when ebbing into all those fabulous and incredible ramblings of Ulysses, shews plainly how sublime it once had been. Not that I am forgetful of those storms, which are described in so terrible a manner in several part of the *Odyssey*; of Ulysses' adventures with the Cyclop, and some other instances of the true sublime. No; I am speaking, indeed, of old age, but it is the old age of Homer. However, it is evident, from the whole series of the *Odyssey*, that there is far more narration in it than action.

I have digressed thus far merely for the sake of shewing, that, in the decline of their vigour, the greatest geniuses are apt to turn aside unto trifles. Those stories of shutting up the winds in a bag; of the men in Circe's island metamorphosed into swine, whom 'Zoilus calls *little squeaking pigs*; of Jupiter's being nursed by the doves like one of their young; of Ulysses in a wreck, when he took no sustenance for ten days; and those incredible absurdities concerning the death of the suitors: all these are undeniable instances of this in the *Odyssey*. Dreams indeed they are, but such as even Jove might dream.

Accept, my friend, in further excuse of this digression, my desire of convincing you, that a decrease of the Pathetic in great orators and poets often ends in the moral<sup>2</sup> kind of writ-

<sup>1</sup> The most infamous name of a certain author, of Thracian extraction, who wrote a treatise against the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer, and entitled it, *Homer's Reprimand*: which so exasperated the people of that age, that they put the author to death, and sacrificed him as it were to the injured genius of Homer. His enterprise was certainly too daring, his punishment undoubtedly too severe.

<sup>2</sup> The word *moral* does not fully give the idea of the original word *ēthos*, but our language will not furnish any other that comes so near it. The meaning of the passage is, that great authors, in the youth and fire of their genius, abound chiefly in such passions as are strong and vehement; but in their old age and decline, they betake themselves to such as are mild, peaceable, and sedate. Hence it is, that bold scenes of action, dreadful alarms, affecting images of terror, and such violent turns of passion, as require a stretch of fancy to express or to conceive, employ the vigour and maturity of youth, in which consists the nature of the Pathetic; but amusing narrations, calm descriptions, delightful landskips, and more even

ing. Thus the *Odyssey*, furnishing us with rules of morality, drawn from that course of life which the suitors led in the palace of Ulysses, has in some degrees the air of a comedy, where the various manners of men are ingeniously and faithfully described.

## SECTION X

LET us consider next, whether we cannot find out some other means to infuse sublimity into our writings. Now, as there are no subjects which are not attended by some adherent circumstances, an accurate and judicious choice of the most suitable of these circumstances; and an ingenious and skilful connexion of them into one body, must necessarily produce the Sublime. For what by the judicious choice, and what by the skilful connexion, they cannot but very much affect the imagination.

Sappho is an instance of this; who, having observed the anxieties and tortures inseparable to jealous love, has collected and displayed them all with the most lively exactness. But in what particular has she shewn her excellence? In selecting those circumstances which suit best with her subject, and afterwards connecting them together with so much art.

Blest as th' immortal gods is he,  
The youth who fondly sits by thee,  
And hears, and sees thee all the while  
Softly speak, and sweetly smile.

'Twas this depriv'd my soul of rest,  
And rais'd such tumults in my breast;  
For while I gaz'd, in transport tost,  
My breath was gone, my voice was lost.

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and peaccable affections, are agreeable in the ebb of life, and therefore more frequently attempted, and more successfully expressed by a declining genius. This is the moral kind of writing here mentioned, and by these particulars is Homer's *Odyssey* distinguished from his *Iliad*.

My bosom glow'd; the subtile flame  
 Ran quick through all my vital frame;  
 O'er my dim eyes a darkness hung;  
 My ears with hollow murmurs rung.

In dewy damps my limbs were chill'd;  
 My blood with gentle horrors thrill'd;  
 My feeble pulse forgot to play,  
 I fainted, sunk, and died away.

—*Philips.*

Are you not amazed, my friend, to find how in the same moment she is at a loss for her soul, her body, her ears, her tongue, her eyes, her colour, all of them as much absent from her, as if they had never belonged to her? And what contrary effects does she feel together? She glows, she chills, she raves, she reasons; now she is in tumults, and now she is dying away. In a word, she seems not to be attacked by one alone, but by a combination of the most violent passions.

All the symptoms of this kind are true effects of jealous love; but the excellence of this Ode, as I observed before, consists in the judicious choice and connexion of the most notable circumstances. And it proceeds from this due application of the most formidable incidents, that the poet excels so much in describing tempests. The <sup>1</sup>author of the poem on the Arimaspians doubts not but these lines are great and full of terror:

Ye pow'rs, what madness! How on ships so frail  
 (Tremendous thought!) can thoughtless mortals sail?  
 For stormy seas they quit the pleasing plain,  
 Plant woods in waves, and dwell amidst the main.  
 Far o'er the deep (a trackless path) they go,  
 And wander oceans in pursuit of woe.

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<sup>1</sup> Aristæus, the Proconnesian, is said to have wrote a poem, called Arimaspiæ; or, of the affairs of the Arimaspians, a Scythian people, situated far from any sea. The lines here quoted seem to be spoken by an Arimaspiæ, wondering how men dare trust themselves in ships, and endeavouring to describe the seamen in the extremities of a storm.

No ease their hearts, no rest their eyes can find,  
 On heav'n their looks, and on the waves their mind;  
 Sunk are their spirits, while their arms they rear,  
 And gods are wearied with their fruitless pray'r. —*Mr. Pope.*

Every impartial reader will discern that these lines are florid more than terrible. But how does Homer raise a description, to mention only *one* example amongst a thousand!

— He bursts upon them all:  
 Bursts as a wave that from the cloud impends,  
 And swell'd with tempests on the ship descends;  
 White are the decks with foam; the winds aloud  
 Howl o'er the masts, and sing through every shroud:  
 Pale, trembling, tir'd, the sailors freeze with fears,  
 And instant death on ev'ry wave appears.<sup>1</sup> —*Mr. Pope.*

Aratus has attempted a refinement upon the last thought, and turned it thus,

A slender plank preserves them from their fate.

But instead of increasing the terror, he only lessens and refines it away; and besides, he sets a bound to the impending danger, by saying, "a plank preserves them," thus banishing their despair. But the poet is so far from confining the danger of his sailors, that he paints them in a most desperate situation, while they are only not swallowed up in every wave, and have death before their eyes as fast as they escape it. Nay more, the danger is discerned in the very hurry and confusion of the words; the verses are tossed up and down with the ship, the harshness and jarring of the syllables give us a lively image of the storm, and the whole description is in itself a terrible and furious tempest.

It is by the same method that Archilochus has succeeded so well in describing a wreck; and Demosthenes, where he relates<sup>2</sup> the confusions at Athens, upon arrival of ill news,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Iliad* xv, ver. 624.

<sup>2</sup> Oration on the Crown.

<sup>3</sup> The whole passage in Demosthenes' oration runs thus:

"It was evening when a courier brought the news to the magistrates of the surprisal of Elatea. Immediately they arose, though in the midst of their repast. Some of them hurried away to the



"It was (says he) in the evening," &c. If I may speak by a figure, they reviewed the forces of their subjects, and culled out the flower of them, with this caution, not to place any mean, or indecent, or coarse expression in so choice a body. For such expressions are like mere patches, or unsightly bits of matter, which in this edifice of grandeur entirely confound the fine proportions, mar the symmetry, and deform the beauty of the whole.

## SECTION XI

THERE is another virtue bearing great affinity to the former, which they call Amplification: whenever (the topics on which we write or debate, admitting of several beginnings, and several pauses in the periods) the great incidents, heaped one upon another, ascend by a continued gradation to a summit of grandeur. Now this may be done to ennoble what is familiar, to aggravate what is wrong, to increase the strength of arguments, to set actions in their true light, or skilfully to manage a passion, and a thousand ways besides. But the orator must never forget this maxim, that in things however amplified, there cannot be perfection, without a sentiment which is truly Sublime, unless when we are to move compassion, or to make things appear as vile and contemptible. But in all other methods of Amplification, if you take away the sublime meaning, you separate as it were the soul

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Forum, and driving the tradesmen out, set fire to their shops. Others fled to advertise the commanders of the army of the news, and to summon the public herald. The whole city was full of tumult. On the morrow, by break of day, the magistrates convene the senate. You, gentlemen, obeyed the summons. Before the public council proceeded to debate, the people took their seats above. When the senate were come in, the magistrates laid open the reasons of their meeting, and produced the courier. He confirmed their report. The herald demanded aloud, Who would harangue? Nobody rose up. The herald repeated the question several times. In vain: nobody rose up: nobody harangued; though all the commanders of the army were there, though the orators were present, though the common voice of our country joined in the petition, and demanded an oration for the public safety."

from the body. For no sooner are they deprived of this necessary support, but they grow dull and languid, lose all their vigour and nerves.

What I have said now differs from what went immediately before. My design was then to shew how much a judicious choice and an artful connexion of proper incidents heighten a subject. But in what manner this sort of Sublimity differs from Amplification, will soon appear by exactly defining the true notion of the latter.

## SECTION XII

I CAN by no means approve of the definition which writers of rhetoric give of Amplification. "Amplification (say they) is a form of words aggrandizing the subject." Now this definition may equally serve for the Sublime, the Pathetic, and the application of Tropes; for these also invest discourse with peculiar airs of grandeur. In my opinion, they differ in these respects: Sublimity consists in loftiness, but Amplification in number; whence the former is often visible in one single thought; the other cannot be discerned, but in a series and chain of thoughts rising one upon another.

"Amplification therefore (to give an exact idea of it), is such a full and complete connexion of all the particular circumstances inherent in the things themselves, as gives them additional strength, by dwelling some time upon, and progressively heightening a particular point." It differs from Proof in a material article, since the end of a Proof is to establish the matter in debate \* \* \* \* \* [The remainder of the Author's remarks on Amplification is lost. What comes next is imperfect; but it is evident from what follows, that Longinus is drawing a parallel between Plato and Demosthenes.]

.(*Plato*) may be compared to the ocean, whose waters, when hurried on by the tide, overflow their ordinary bounds, and are diffused into a vast extent. And in my opinion, this is the cause that the orator (*Demosthenes*), striking with more powerful might at the passions, is inflamed with fervent vehemence, and passionate ardour; whilst *Plato*, always grave,

sedate, and majestic, though he never was cold or flat, yet fell vastly short of the impetuous thundering of the other.

And it is in the same points, my dear TERENTIANUS, that Cicero and Demosthenes (if we Grecians may be admitted to speak our opinions), differ in the Sublime. The one is at the same time grand and concise, the other grand and diffusive. Our Demosthenes, uttering every sentence with such force, precipitation, strength, and vehemence, that it seems to be all fire, and bears down everything before it, may justly be resembled to a thunderbolt, or a hurricane. But Cicero, like a wide conflagration, devours and spreads on all sides; his flames are numerous, and their heat is lasting; they break out at different times in different quarters, and are nourished up to a raging violence by successive additions of proper fuel. I must not however pretend to judge in this case so well as you. But the true season of applying so forcible and intense a Sublime as that of Demosthenes, is, in the strong efforts of discourse, in vehement attacks upon the passions, and whenever the audience are to be stricken at once, and thrown into consternation. And recourse must be had to such diffusive eloquence as that of Cicero, when they are to be soothed and brought over by gentle and soft insinuation. Besides, this diffuse kind of eloquence is most proper for all familiar topics; for perorations, digressions, for easy narrations or pompous amusements, for history, for short accounts of the operations of nature, and many other sorts.

### SECTION XIII

To leave this digression. Though Plato's style particularly excels in smoothness, and an easy and peaceable flow of the words, yet neither does it want an elevation and grandeur: and of this you cannot be ignorant, as you have read the following passage in his Republic. "Those wretches (says he) who never have experienced the sweets of wisdom and virtue, but spend all their time in revels and debauches, sink downwards day after day, and make their whole life one continued series of errors. They never have the courage to lift the eye upwards towards truth, they never felt any the

least inclination to it. They taste no real or substantial pleasure; but resembling so many brutes, with eyes always fixed on the earth, and intent upon their loaden tables, they pamper themselves up in luxury and excess. So that hurried on by their voracious and insatiable appetites, they are continually running and kicking at one another with hoofs and horns of steel, and are embrued in perpetual slaughter."

This excellent writer, if we can but resolve to follow his guidance, opens here before us another path, besides those already mentioned, which will carry to the true Sublime. —And what is this path?—Why, an imitation and emulation of the greatest orators and poets that ever flourished. And let this, my friend, be our ambition; be this the fixed and lasting scope of all our labours.

For hence it is, that numbers of imitators are ravished and transported by a spirit not their own, <sup>1</sup>like the Pythian Priestess, when she approaches the sacred tripod. There is, if Fame speaks true, a chasm in the earth, *from whence exhale Divine evaporations*, which impregnate her on a sudden with the inspiration of her god, and cause in her the utterance of oracles and predictions. So, from the sublime spirit of the ancients, there arise some fine effluvia, like vapours from the sacred vents, which work themselves insensibly into the breasts of imitators, and fill those, who naturally are not of a towering genius, with the lofty ideas and fire of others. Was Herodotus alone the constant imitator of Homer? No: Stesichorus<sup>2</sup> and Archilochus imitated him more

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<sup>1</sup> It was the custom for the Pythian to sit on the tripod, till she was rapt into Divine frenzy by the operation of effluvia issuing out of the clefts of the earth. In the same manner, says Longinus, they, who imitate the best writers, seem to be inspired by those whom they imitate, and to be actuated by their sublime spirit. In this comparison, those Divine writers are set on a level almost with the gods; they have equal power attributed to them with the deity presiding over oracles, and the effect of their operations on their imitators is honoured with the title of a Divine spirit.

<sup>2</sup> Stesichorus, a noble poet, inventor of the Lyric Chorus. Quintilian says thus of him:—"If he had kept in due bounds, he seems to have been able to come the nearest to a rivalry with Homer."



than Herodotus; but Plato more than all of them; who, from the copious Homeric fountain, has drawn a thousand rivulets to cherish and improve his own productions. Perhaps there might be a necessity of my producing some examples of this had not Ammonius done it to my hand.

Nor is such proceeding to be looked upon as plagiarism, but, in methods consistent with the nicest honour, an imitation of the finest pieces, or copying out those bright originals. Neither do I think that Plato would have so much embellished his philosophical tenets with the florid expressions of poetry, 'had he not been ambitious of entering the lists, like a youthful champion, and ardently contending for the prize with Homer, who had a long time engrossed the admiration of the world. The attack was perhaps too rash, the opposition perhaps had too much the air of enmity, but yet it could not fail of some advantage; for, as Hesiod says,<sup>2</sup>

Such brave contention works the good of men.

A greater prize than the glory and renown of the ancients can never be contended for, where victory crowns with

<sup>1</sup> Plato, in his younger days, had an inclination to poetry, and made some attempts in tragedy and epic; but finding them unable to bear a parallel with the verses of Homer, he threw them into the fire, and abjured that sort of writing, in which he was convinced he must always remain an inferior: however, the style of his prose has a poetical sweetness, majesty, and elevation. Though he despaired of equalling Homer in his own way, yet he has nobly succeeded in another, and is justly esteemed the Homer of philosophers. Cicero was so great an admirer of him that he said, "If Jupiter conversed with men, he would talk in the language of Plato." It was a common report in the age he lived, that bees dropped honey on his lips as he lay in the cradle. And it is said, that, the night before he was placed under the tuition of Socrates, the philosopher dreamed he had embraced a young swan in his bosom: who, after his feathers were full grown, stretched out his wings, and soared to an immense height in the air, singing all the time with inexpressible sweetness. This shews at least what a great opinion they then entertained of his eloquence, since they thought its appearance worthy to be ushered into the world with omens and prognostics.

<sup>2</sup> In his Works and Days.



never-dying applause; when even a defeat, in such a competition, is attended with honour.

#### SECTION XIV

IF ever therefore we are engaged in a work which requires a grandeur of style and exalted sentiments, would it not then be of use to raise in ourselves such reflections as these?—How in this case would Homer, or Plato, or Demosthenes, have raised their thoughts? Or if it be historical—how would Thucydides? For these celebrated persons, being proposed by us for our pattern and imitation, will in some degree lift up our souls to the standard of their own genius. It will be yet of greater use, if to the preceding reflections we add these—What would Homer or Demosthenes have thought of this piece? or what judgment would they have passed upon it? It is really a noble enterprise, to frame such a theatre and tribunal, to sit on our own compositions, and submit them to a scrutiny, in which such celebrated heroes must preside as our judges, and be at the same time our evidence. There is yet another motive which may yield most powerful incitements, if we ask ourselves—What character will posterity form of this work, and of me, the author? For if any one, in the moments of composing, apprehends that his performance may not be able to survive him, the productions of a soul, whose views are so short and confined, that it cannot promise itself the esteem and applause of succeeding ages, must needs be imperfect and abortive.

#### SECTION XV

VISIONS, which by some are called Images, contribute very much, my dearest youth, to the weight, magnificence, and force of compositions. The name of an Image is generally given to any idea, however represented in the mind, which is communicable to others by discourse; but a more particular sense of it has now prevailed: “When the imagination is so warmed and affected, that you seem to behold yourself the very things you are describing, and to display them to the life before the eyes of an audience.”

You cannot be ignorant, that rhetorical and poetical images have a different intent. The design of a poetical image is surprise, that of a rhetorical is perspicuity. However, to move and strike the imagination is a design common to both.

Pity thy offspring, mother, nor provoke  
Those vengeful Furies to torment thy son.  
What horrid sights! how glare their bloody eyes!  
How twisting snakes curl round their venom'd heads!  
In deadly wrath the hissing monsters rise,  
Forward they spring, dart out, and leap around me.<sup>1</sup>

And again:

Alas!—she'll kill me!—whither shall I fly?<sup>2</sup>

The poet here actually saw the furies with the eyes of his imagination, and has compelled his audience to see what he beheld himself. Euripides therefore has laboured very much in his tragedies to describe the two passions of madness and love, and has succeeded much better in these than (if I am not mistaken) in any other. Sometimes, indeed, he boldly aims at Images of different kinds. For though his genius was not naturally great, yet in many instances he even forced it up to the true spirit of tragedy; and that he may always rise where his subject demands it (to borrow an allusion from the Poet)<sup>3</sup>

Lash'd by his tail his heaving sides incite  
His courage, and provoke himself for fight,

The foregoing assertion is evident from that passage, where Sol delivers the reins of his chariot to Phaëton:

<sup>4</sup> Drive on, but cautious shun the Lybian air;  
That hot unmoisten'd region of the sky  
Will drop thy chariot.—

<sup>1</sup> Euripid. Orest. ver. 255.

<sup>2</sup> Euripid. Iphigen. Taur. ver. 408.

<sup>3</sup> Iliad xix, ver. 170.

<sup>4</sup> This passage, in all probability, is taken from a tragedy of Euripides, named Phaëton, which is entirely lost.

And a little after,

Thence let the Pleiads point thy wary course.  
Thus spoke the god. Th' impatient youth with haste  
Snatches the reins, and vaults into the seat.  
He starts; the coursers, whom the lashing whip  
Excites, outstrip the winds, and whirl the car  
High through the airy void. Behind, the sire,  
Borne on his planetary steed, pursues  
With eye intent, and warns him with his voice,  
Drive there!—now here!—here! turn the chariot here!

Who would not say, that the soul of the poet mounted the chariot along with the rider, that it shared as well in danger as in rapidity of flight with the horses? For, had he not been hurried on with equal ardour through all this ethereal course, he could never have conceived so grand an image of it. There are some parallel Images in his Cassandra:<sup>1</sup>

Ye martial Trojans, &c.

Æschylus has made bold attempts in noble and truly heroic Images; as, in one of his tragedies, the seven commanders against Thebes, without betraying the least sign of pity or regret, bind themselves by oath not to survive Eteocles:—

The seven, a warlike leader each in chief,  
Stood round; and o'er the brazen shield they slew  
A sullen bull; then plunging deep their hands  
Into the foaming gore, with oaths invok'd  
Mars, and Enyo, and blood-thirsting terror.

Sometimes, indeed, the thoughts of this author are too gross, rough, and unpolished; yet Euripides himself, spurred on too fast by emulation, ventures even to the brink of like imperfections. In Æschylus the palace of Lycurgus is surprisingly affected by the sudden appearance of Bacchus:

The frantic dome and roaring roofs convuls'd,  
Reel to and fro, instinct with rage divine.

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<sup>1</sup> The Cassandra of Euripides is now entirely lost.

Euripides has the same thought, but he has turned it with much more softness and propriety:

The vocal mount in agitation shakes,  
And echoes back the Bacchanalian cries.

Sophocles has succeeded nobly in his Images, when he describes his Œdipus in all the agonies of approaching death, and burying himself in the midst of a prodigious tempest; when he gives us a sight of the <sup>1</sup>apparition of Achilles upon his tomb, at the departure of the Greeks from Troy. But I know not whether any one has described that apparition more divinely than <sup>2</sup>Simonides. To quote all these instances at large would be endless.

To return: Images in poetry are pushed to a fabulous excess, quite surpassing the bounds of probability; whereas in oratory, their beauty consists in the most exact propriety and nicest truth: and sublime excursions are absurd and impertinent, when mingled with fiction and fable, where fancy sallies out into direct impossibilities. Yet to excesses like these, our able orators (kind Heaven make them really such!) are very much addicted. With the tragedians, they behold the tormenting furies, and with all their sagacity never find out, that when Orestes exclaims,<sup>3</sup>—

Loose me, thou fury, let me go, torment'ress:  
Close you embrace, to plunge me headlong down  
Into th' abyss of Tartarus——

the Image had seized his fancy, because the mad fit was upon him, and he was actually raving.

What then is the true use of Images in Oratory? They are capable, in abundance of cases, to add both nerves and passion to our speeches. For if the Images be skilfully

<sup>1</sup> The tragedy of Sophocles, where this apparition is described, is entirely lost.

<sup>2</sup> Simonides the Ceian was a celebrated poet. Cicero declares him the inventor of artificial memory: and Quintilian gives him this commendation as a poet: "His excellency lay in moving compassion, so that some prefer him in this particular before all other writers."

<sup>3</sup> Euripid. Orest. v. 264.

blended with the Proofs and Descriptions, they not only persuade, but subdue an audience. "If any one (says a great orator<sup>1</sup>) should hear a sudden outcry before the tribunal, whilst another brings the news that the prison is burst open and the captives escaped, no man, either young or old, would be of so abject a spirit as to deny his utmost assistance. But if amongst this hurry and confusion another should arrive, and cry out, This is the Author of these disorders—the miserable accused, unjudged and unsentenced, would perish on the spot."

So Hyperides, when he was accused of passing an illegal decree, for giving liberty to slaves, after the defeat of Chæroneia; "It was not an orator," said he, "that made this decree, but the battle of Chæroneia." At the same time that he exhibits proofs of his legal proceedings, he intermixes an Image of the battle, and by that stroke of art, quite passes the bounds of mere persuasion. It is natural to us to hearken always to that which is extraordinary and surprising; whence it is, that we regard not the Proof so much as the grandeur and lustre of the Image, which quite eclipses the Proof itself. This bias of the mind has an easy solution; since, when two such things are blended together, the stronger will attract to itself all the virtue and efficacy of the weaker.

These observations will, I fancy, be sufficient, concerning that Sublime which belongs to the Sense, and takes its rise either from an Elevation of Thought, a choice and connexion of proper Incidents, Amplification, Imitation, or Images.

## PART II

THE Pathetic, which the Author, Sect. viii. laid down for the second source of the Sublime, is omitted here, because it was reserved for a distinct treatise.—*See Sect. xlv*, with the note.

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<sup>1</sup> Demosthenes.



### PART III

#### SECTION XVI

THE topic that comes next in order, is that of Figures; for these, when judiciously used, conduce not a little to greatness. But since it would be tedious, if not infinite labour, exactly to describe all the species of them, I shall instance only some few of those which contribute most to the elevation of the style, on purpose to shew that we lay not a greater stress upon them than is really their due.

Demosthenes is producing proofs of his upright behaviour whilst in public employ. Now, which is the most natural method of doing this? ("You were not in the wrong, Athenians, when you courageously ventured your lives in fighting for the liberty and safety of Greece, of which you have domestic illustrious examples. For neither were they in the wrong who fought at Marathon, who fought at Salamis, who fought at Plateæ.") Demosthenes takes another course, and filled as it were with sudden inspiration, and transported by a godlike warmth, he thunders out an oath by the champions of Greece: "You were not in the wrong, no, you were not, I swear, by those noble souls, who were so lavish of their lives in the field of Marathon,"<sup>1</sup> &c. He seems, by this figurative manner of swearing, which I call an Apostrophe, to have deified their noble ancestors; at the same time instructing them, that they ought to swear by persons, who fell so gloriously, as by so many gods. He stamps into the breasts of his judges the generous principles of those applauded patriots; and by transferring what was naturally a proof, into a soaring strain of the Sublime and the Pathetic, strengthened by such a solemn, such an unusual and reputable oath, he instils that balm into their minds, which heals every painful reflection, and assuages the smart of misfortune. He breathes new life into them by his artful encomiums, and teaches them to set as great a value on their unsuccessful engagement with Philip, as on the victories of Marathon and Salamis. In short, by the sole application of this Figure, he violently seizes

<sup>1</sup> Oration on the Crown.

the favour and attention of his audience, and compels them to acquiesce in the event, as they cannot blame the undertaking.

Some would insinuate, that the hint of this oath was taken from these lines of <sup>1</sup>Eupolis:

No! by my labours in that glorious <sup>2</sup>field,  
Their joy shall not produce my discontent!

But the grandeur consists not in the bare application of an oath, but in applying it in the proper place, in a pertinent manner, at the exactest time, and for the strongest reasons. Yet in Eupolis there is nothing but an oath, and that addressed to the Athenians, at a time they were flushed with conquest, and consequently did not require consolation. Besides, the poet did not swear by heroes, whom he had before deified himself, and thereby raise sentiments in the audience worthy of such virtue; but deviated from those illustrious souls, who ventured their lives for their country, to swear by an inanimate object, the battle. In Demosthenes, the oath is addressed to the vanquished, to the end that the defeat of Chæronea may be no longer regarded by the Athenians as a misfortune. It is at one time a clear demonstration that they had done their duty; it gives occasion for an illustrious example; it is an oath artfully addressed, a just encomium and a moving exhortation. And whereas this objection might be thrown in his way, "You speak of a defeat partly occasioned by your own ill conduct, and then you swear by those celebrated victories;" the orator took care to weigh all his words in the balances of art, and thereby brings them off with security and honour. From which prudent conduct we may infer, that sobriety and moderation must be observed, in the warmest fits of fire and transport. In speaking of their ancestors, he says, "Those who so bravely exposed themselves to danger in the plains of Marathon, those who were in the naval engagements near Salamis and Artemisium, and those who fought at Plataæ;" industriously suppressing the very men-

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<sup>1</sup> Eupolis was an Athenian writer of comedy, of whom nothing remains at present, but the renown of his name.

<sup>2</sup> Marathon.

tion of the events of those battles, because they were successful, and quite opposite to that of Chæroneæ. Upon which account he anticipates all objections, by immediately subjoining, "all whom, Æschines, the city honoured with a public funeral, not because they purchased victory with their lives, but because they lost those for their country."

## SECTION XVII

I MUST not in this place, my friend, omit an observation of my own, which I will mention in the shortest manner: Figures naturally impart assistance to, and on the other side receive it again, in a wonderful manner, from sublime sentiments. And I will now shew where, and by what means, this is done.

A too frequent and elaborate application of Figures, carries with it a great suspicion of artifice, deceit, and fraud, especially when, in pleading, we speak before a judge, from whose sentence lies no appeal; and much more, if before a tyrant, a monarch, or any one invested with arbitrary power, or unbounded authority. For he grows immediately angry, if he thinks himself childishly amused, and attacked by the quirks and subtleties of a wily rhetorician. He regards the attempt as an insult and affront to his understanding, and sometimes breaks out into bitter indignation; and though perhaps he may suppress his wrath, and stifle his resentments for the present, yet he is averse, nay even deaf, to the most plausible and persuasive arguments that can be alleged. Wherefore, a Figure is then most dexterously applied, when it cannot be discerned that it is a Figure.

Now a due mixture of the Sublime and Pathetic very much increases the force, and removes the suspicion, that commonly attends on the use of Figures. For veiled, as it were, and wrapt up in such beauty and grandeur, they seem to disappear, and securely defy discovery. I cannot produce a better example to strengthen this assertion, than the preceding from Demosthenes: "I swear by those noble souls," &c. For in what has the orator here concealed the Figure? Plainly, in its own lustre. For as the stars are quite dimmed

and obscured, when the sun breaks out in all his blazing rays, so the artifices of rhetoric are entirely overshadowed by the superior splendour of sublime thoughts. A parallel illustration may be drawn from painting: for when several colours of light and shade are drawn upon the same surface, those of light seem not only to rise out of the piece, but even to lie much nearer to the sight. So the Sublime and Pathetic, either by means of a great affinity they bear to the springs and movements of our souls, or by their own superlative lustre, always outshine the adjacent Figures, whose art they shadow, and whose appearance they cover, in a veil of superior beauties.

### SECTION XVIII

WHAT shall I say here of Question and Interrogation? Is not discourse enlivened, strengthened, and thrown more forcibly along by this sort of Figure? "Would you," says Demosthenes,<sup>1</sup> "go about the city, and demand what news? What greater news can there be, than that a Macedonian enslaves the Athenians, and lords it over Greece? Is Philip dead? No: but he is very sick. And what advantage would accrue to you from his death, when, as soon as his head is laid, you yourselves will raise up another Philip?" And again,<sup>1</sup> "Let us set sail for Macedonia. But where shall we land? The very war will discover to us the rotten and unguarded sides of Philip." Had this been uttered simply and without Interrogation, it would have fallen vastly short of the majesty requisite to the subject in debate. But as it is, the energy and rapidity that appears in every question and answer, and the quick replies to his own demands, as if they were the objections of another person, not only renders his oration more sublime and lofty, but more plausible and probable. For the Pathetic then works the most surprising effects upon us, when it seems not fitted to the subject by the skill of the speaker, but to flow opportunely from it. And this method of questioning and answering to one's self, imitates the quick emotions of a passion in its birth. For in com-

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<sup>1</sup> Demosthenes, Philip.

mon conversation, when people are questioned, they are warmed at once, and answer the demands put to them with earnestness and truth. And thus this Figure of Question and Answer is of wonderful efficacy in prevailing upon the hearer, and imposing on him a belief, that those things, which are studied and laboured, are uttered without premeditation, in the heat and fluency of discourse.—[What follows here is the beginning of a sentence now maimed and imperfect, but it is evident, from the few words yet remaining, that the Author was going to add another instance of the use of this Figure from Herodotus.] \* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

## SECTION XIX

\* \* \* \* \* [The beginning of this Section is lost, but the sense is easily supplied from what immediately follows.] Another great help in attaining grandeur, is banishing the Copulatives at a proper season. For sentences, artfully divested of Conjunctions, drop smoothly down, and the periods are poured along in such a manner, that they seem to outstrip the very thought of the speaker. “Then (says Xenophon<sup>1</sup>) closing their shields together, they were pushed, they fought, they slew, they were slain.” So Eurylochus in Homer:<sup>2</sup>

We went, Ulysses! (such was thy command)  
Through the lone thicket, and the desert land;  
A palace in a woody vale we found,  
Brown with dark forests, and with shades around.

— *Mr. Pope.*

For words of this sort dissevered from one another, and yet uttered at the same time with precipitation, carry with them the energy and marks of a consternation, which at once restrains and accelerates the words. So skilfully has Homer rejected the Conjunctions.

<sup>1</sup> *Rerum Græc.*

<sup>2</sup> *Odyssey x, ver. 251.*



## SECTION XX

BUT nothing so effectually moves, as a heap of Figures combined together. For when two or three are linked together in firm confederacy, they communicate strength, efficacy, and beauty to one another. So in Demosthenes' oration against Midias, the Asyndetons are blended and mixed together with the repetitions and lively description. "There are several turns in the gesture, in the look, in the voice of the man, who does violence to another, which it is impossible for the party that suffers such violence, to express." And that the course of his oration might not languish or grow dull by a further progress in the same track (for calmness and sedateness attend always upon order, but the Pathetic always rejects order, because it throws the soul into transport and emotion), he passes immediately to new Asyndetons and fresh repetitions—"in the gesture, in the look, in the voice—when like a ruffian, when like an enemy, when with his fist, when on the face."—The effect of these words upon his judges, is that of the blows of him who made the assault; the strokes fall thick upon one another, and their very souls are subdued by so violent an attack. Afterwards, he charges again with all the force and impetuosity of hurricanes: "When with his fist, when on the face."—"These things affect, these things exasperate men unused to such outrages. Nobody, in giving a recital of these things, can express the heinousness of them." By frequent variation, he every where preserves the natural force of his Repetitions and Asyndetons, so that with him order seems always disordered, and disorder carries with it a surprising regularity.

## SECTION XXI

To illustrate the foregoing observation, let us imitate the style of Isocrates, and insert the Copulatives in this passage, wherever they may seem requisite. "Nor indeed, is one observation to be omitted, that he who commits violence on another, may do many things, &c.—*first* in his gesture, *then* in his countenance, and *thirdly* in his voice, which," &c. And if you proceed to insert the Conjunctions, you will find, that, by

smoothing the roughness, and filling up the breaks by such additions, what was before forcibly, surprisingly, irresistibly pathetical, will lose all its energy and spirit, will have all its fire immediately extinguished. To bind the limbs of racers, is to deprive them of active motion and the power of stretching. In like manner, the Pathetic, when embarrassed and entangled in the bonds of Copulatives, cannot subsist without difficulty. It is quite deprived of liberty in its race, and divested of that impetuosity, by which it strikes the very instant it is discharged.

## SECTION XXII

HYPERBATONS also are to be ranked among the serviceable Figures. An Hyperbaton is a transposing of words or thoughts out of their natural and grammatical order, and it is a figure stamped as it were with the truest image of a most forcible passion.<sup>1</sup> When men are actuated either by wrath, or fear, or indignation, or jealousy, or any of those numberless passions incident to the mind, which cannot be reckoned up, they fluctuate here, and there, and every where; are still upon forming new resolutions, and breaking through measures before concerted, without any apparent reason: still unfixed and undetermined, their thoughts are in perpetual hurry; till, tossed as it were by some unstable blast, they sometimes return to their first resolution: so that, by this flux and reflux of passion, they alter their thoughts, their language, and their manner of expression, a thousand times. Hence it comes to pass, that an imitation of these transpositions gives the most celebrated writers the greatest resemblance of the inward workings of nature. For art may then be termed perfect and consummate, when it seems to be nature; and nature

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<sup>1</sup> Longinus here, in explaining the nature of the Hyperbaton, and again in the close of the Section, has made use of an Hyperbaton, or (to speak more truly) of a certain confused and more extensive compass of a sentence. Whether he did this by accident, or design, I cannot determine; though Le Fevre thinks it a piece of art in the Author in order to adapt the diction to the subject.—*Dr. Pearce.*

then succeeds best, when she conceals what assistance she receives from art.

In Herodotus, Dionysius the Phocæan speaks thus in a Transposition: "For our affairs are come to their crisis; now is the important moment, Ionians, to secure your liberty, or to undergo that cruelty and oppression which is the portion of slaves, nay, fugitive slaves. Submit yourselves then to toil and labour for the present. This toil and labour will be of no long continuance: it will defeat your enemies, and guard your freedom." The natural order was this: "O Ionians, now is the time to submit to toil and labour, for your affairs are come to their crisis," &c. But as he transposed the salutation, Ionians, and after having thrown them into consternation, subjoins it; it seems as if fright had hindered him, at setting out, from paying due civility to his audience. In the next place, he inverts the order of the thoughts. Before he exhorts them to "submit to toil and labour," (for that is the end of his exhortation) he mentions the reason why labour and toil must be undergone. "Your affairs (says he) are come to their crisis,"—so that his words seem not premeditated, but to be forced unavoidably from him.

But Thucydides is still more of a perfect master in that surprising dexterity of transposing and inverting the order of those things, which seem naturally united and inseparable. Demosthenes, indeed, attempts not this so often as Thucydides, yet he is more discreetly liberal of this kind of Figure than any other writer. He seems to invert the very order of his discourse, and, what is more, to utter every thing extempore; so that by means of his long Transpositions he drags his readers along, and conducts them through all the intricate mazes of his discourse: frequently arresting his thoughts in the midst of their career he makes excursions into different subjects, and intermingles several seemingly unnecessary incidents: by this means he gives his audience a kind of anxiety, as if he had lost his subject, and forgotten what he was about; and so strongly engages their concern, that they tremble for, and bear their share in, the dangers of the speaker: at length, after a long ramble he very pertinently, but unexpectedly, returns to his subject, and raises the surprise and admiration

of all, by these daring, but happy Transpositions. The plenty of examples which every where occur in his orations, will be my excuse for giving no particular instance.

## SECTION XXIII

THOSE Figures, which are called <sup>1</sup> Polyptotes, as also <sup>2</sup> Collections, <sup>3</sup> Changes, and <sup>4</sup> Gradations, are (as you know, my friend) well adapted to emotion, and serviceable in adorning, and rendering what we say, in all respects, more grand and affecting. And to what an amazing degree do <sup>5</sup> Changes either of Time, Case, Person, Number, Gender, diversify and enliven the style!

<sup>1</sup> Longinus gives no instance of this Figure: but one may be produced from Cicero's oration for Cælius, where he says, "We will contend with arguments, we will refute accusations by evidences brighter than light itself: fact shall engage with fact, cause with cause, reason with reason."

<sup>2</sup> The orator makes use of this Figure, when, instead of the whole of a thing, he numbers up all its particulars: of which we have an instance in Cicero's oration for Marcellus: "The centurion has no share in this honour, the lieutenant none, the cohort none, the troop none."

<sup>3</sup> Quintilian gives an instance of this Figure, from Cicero's oration for Sex. Roscius: "For though he is master of so much art, as to seem the only person alive who is fit to appear upon the stage; yet he is possessed of such noble qualities, that he seems to be the only man alive who may seem worthy never to appear there."

<sup>4</sup> "Gradations."] There is an instance of this Figure in Rom. v. It is continued throughout the chapter, but the branches of the latter part appear not plainly, because of the Transpositions. It begins ver. 1. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because," &c. &c.

<sup>5</sup> Changes of Case and Gender fall not under the district of the English tongue. On those of Time, Person, and Number, Longinus enlarges in the sequel.

As to Change of Numbers, I assert, that in words *singular* in form may be discerned all the vigour and efficacy of *plurals*, and that such *singulars* are highly ornamental.

<sup>1</sup> Along the shores an endless crowd appear,  
Whose noise, and din, and shouts, confound the ear.

But *plurals* are most worthy of remark, because they impart a greater magnificence to the style, and by the copiousness of number give it more emphasis and grace. So the words of *Œdipus* in *Sophocles*;<sup>2</sup>

——— Oh! nuptials, nuptials!  
You first produc'd, and since our fatal birth  
Have mix'd our blood, and all our race confounded,  
Blended in horrid and incestuous bonds!  
See! fathers, brothers, sons, a dire alliance!  
See! sisters, wives, and mothers! all the names  
That e'er from lust or incest could arise.

All these terms denote on the one side *Œdipus* only, and on the other *Jocasta*. But the number thrown into the *plural*, seems to multiply the misfortunes of that unfortunate pair. So another poet has made use of the same method of increase,

Then *Hectors* and *Sarpedons* issued forth.

Of this Figure is that expression of *Plato* concerning the *Athenians*, quoted by me in my other writings. "For neither do the *Pelops's*, nor the *Cadmus's*, nor the *Ægyptus's*, nor the *Danaus's*, dwell here with us, nor indeed any others of barbarous descent; but we ourselves, *Grecians* entirely, not having our blood debased by barbarian mixtures, dwell here alone," &c. <sup>3</sup>When the words are thus confusedly thrown into multitudes, one upon another, they excite in us greater and more elevated ideas of things. Yet recourse is not to be had to this Figure on all occasions, but then only when the

<sup>1</sup> The beauty of this Figure will, I fear, be lost in the translation. But it must be observed, that the word *crowd*, is of the singular, and *appear*, of the plural number.

<sup>2</sup> *Œdip.* Tyran. ver. 1417.

<sup>3</sup> *Plato* in *Menexeno*.



subject will admit of an Amplification, an Enlargement, Hyperbolé, or Passion, either one or more. 'For to hang such trappings to every passage is highly pedantic.

## SECTION XXIV

ON the contrary also, *plurals* reduced and contradicted into *singulars*, have sometimes much grandeur and magnificence. <sup>2</sup> "Besides, all Peloponnesus was at that time rent into factions."<sup>3</sup> And, "At the representation of Phrynicus's tragedy, called, The Siege of Miletus,<sup>4</sup> the whole théâtre was melted into tears."<sup>5</sup> For uniting thus one complete number out of several distinct, renders a discourse more nervous and solid. But the beauty, in each of these figures, arises from the same cause, which is the unexpected change of a word into its opposite number. For when *singulars* occur unexpectedly to multiply them into *plurals*, and by a sudden and unforeseen change, to contract *plurals* into one *singular* sounding and emphatical, is the mark of a pathetic speaker.

## SECTION XXV

WHEN you introduce things *past* as actually *present*, and in the moment of action, you no longer relate, but display, the very action before the eyes of your readers. "A soldier (says Xenophon<sup>6</sup>) falls down under Cyrus's horse, and being

<sup>1</sup> The metaphor is borrowed from a custom among the ancients, who, at public games and concourses, were used to hang little bells on the bridles and trapping of their horses, that their continual chiming might add pomp to the solemnity.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of, "all the inhabitants of Peloponnesus were at that time rent into factions."

<sup>3</sup> Demosthenes' Oration on the Crown.

<sup>4</sup> Instead of, "all the people in the theatre." Miletus was a city of Ionia, which the *Persians* besieged and took. Phrynicus, a tragic poet, brought a play on the stage about the demolition of this city. But the Athenians (as Herodotus informs us) fined him a thousand drachmæ, for ripping open afresh their domestic sores; and published an edict, that no one should ever after that on that subject.

<sup>5</sup> Herodotus.

<sup>6</sup> Education of Cyrus.

trampled under foot, wounds him in the belly with his sword. The horse, impatient of the wound, flings about, and throws off Cyrus. He falls to the ground." Thucydides very frequently makes use of this Figure.

## SECTION XXVI

CHANGE of persons has also a wonderful effect, in setting the very things before our eyes, and making the hearer think himself actually present and concerned in dangers, when he is only attentive to a recital of them.

No force could vanquish them, thou would'st have thought,  
No toil fatigue, so furiously they fought.<sup>1</sup>

And so Aratus,

O put not thou to sea in that sad month!

And this passage of Herodotus: "You shall sail upwards from the city Elephantina, and at length you will arrive upon a level coast.—After you have travelled over this tract of land, you shall go on board another ship, and sail two days, and then you will arrive at a great city, called Meroe." You see, my friend, how he carries your imagination along with him in this excursion! how he conducts it through the different scenes, making even hearing sight! And all such passages, directly addressed to the hearers, make them fancy themselves actually present in every occurrence. But when you address your discourse, not in general to all, but to one in particular, as here,<sup>2</sup>

You could not see, so fierce Tydides rag'd,  
Whether for Greece or Ilion he engag'd——

—*Mr. Pope.*

By this address. you will not only strike more upon his passions, but fill him with a more earnest attention, and a more anxious impatience for the event.

<sup>1</sup>Iliad xix, ver. 698.

<sup>2</sup>Iliad v, ver. 85.

## SECTION XXVII

SOMETIMES when a writer is saying any thing of a person, he brings him in, by a sudden Transition, to speak for himself. This figure produces a vehement and lively Pathetic.

Now Hector, with loud voice, renew'd their toils,  
Bade them assault the ships and leave the spoils;  
But whom I find at distance from the fleet,  
He from this vengeful arm his death shall meet.<sup>1</sup>

That part of the narration, which he could go through with decency, the poet here assumes to himself, but, without any previous notice, claps this abrupt menace into the mouth of his angry hero. How flat must it have sounded, had he stopped to put in, *Hector spoke thus, or thus?* But now the quickness of the Transition outstrips the very thought of the poet.

Upon which account this figure is then most seasonably applied, when the pressing exigency of time will not admit of any stop or delay, but even enforces a transition from persons to persons, as in this passage of <sup>2</sup>Hecateus: "Ceyx, very much troubled at these proceedings, immediately commanded all the descendants of the Heraclidæ to depart his territories—For I am unable to assist you. To prevent therefore your own destruction, and not to involve me in your ruin, go seek a retreat amongst another people."

Demosthenes has made use of this Figure in a different manner, and with much more passion and volubility, in his oration against Aristogiton: "And shall not one among you boil with wrath, when the iniquity of this insolent and profligate wretch is laid before your eyes? This insolent wretch, I say, who—Thou most abandoned creature! when excluded the liberty of speaking, not by bars or gates, for these indeed some other might have burst."—The thought is here left imperfect and unfinished, and he almost tears his words asunder to address them at once to different persons; "Who—Thou

<sup>1</sup> Iliad xx, ver. 346.

<sup>2</sup> Hecateus the Milesian, according to Suidas, was the first of the historians who wrote in prose.

most abandoned creature!" Having diverted his discourse from Aristogiton, and seemingly left him, he turns again upon him, and attacks him afresh with more violent strokes of heat and passion. So Penelope in Homer,<sup>1</sup>

The lordly suitors send! But why must you  
Bring baneful mandates from that odious crew?  
What! must the faithful servants of my lord  
Forego their tasks for them to crown the board?  
I scorn their love, and I detest their sight;  
And may they share their last of feasts to-night!  
Why thus, ungen'rous men, devour my son?  
Why riot thus, till he be quite undone?  
Heedless of him, yet timely hence retire,  
And fear the vengeance of his awful sire.  
Did not your fathers oft his might commend?  
And children you the wondrous tale attend?  
That injur'd hero you return'd may see,  
Think what he was, and dread what he may be.

## SECTION XXVIII

THAT a Periphrasis (or Circumlocution) is a cause of Sublimity, nobody, I think, can deny. For as in music an important word is rendered more sweet, by the divisions which are run harmoniously upon it; so a Periphrasis sweetens a discourse carried on in propriety of language, and contributes very much to the ornament of it, especially if there be no jarring or discord in it, but every part be judiciously and musically tempered. This may be established beyond dispute from a passage of Plato, in the beginning of his Funeral Oration: "We have now discharged the last duties we owe to these our departed friends, who, thus provided, make the fatal voyage. They have been conducted publicly on their way by the whole body of the city, and in a private capacity by their parents and relations." Here he calls Death "the fatal voyage," and discharging the funeral offices, a public conducting of them by their country. And who can deny that the sentiment by this means is very much exalted? or

<sup>1</sup> *Odyssey* iv, ver. 681.

that Plato, by infusing a melodious Circumlocution, has tempered a naked and barren thought with harmony and sweetness? So Xenophon:<sup>1</sup> "You look upon toil as the guide to a happy life. Your souls are possessed of the best qualification that can adorn a martial breast. Nothing produces in you such sensible emotions of joy as commendation." By expressing an inclination to endure toil in this Circumlocution, "You look upon labour as the guide to a happy life;" and by enlarging some other words after the same manner, he has not only exalted the sense, but given new grace to his encomium. So that inimitable passage of Herodotus; "The goddess afflicted those Scythians, who had sacrilegiously pilaged her temple with the female disease."<sup>2</sup>

## SECTION XXIX

CIRCUMLOCUTION is indeed more dangerous than any other kind of figure, unless it be used with great circumspection; it is otherwise very apt to grow trifling and insipid, and savour strongly of pedantry and dulness. For this reason, Plato (though for the generality superior to all in his figures, yet being sometimes too lavish of them) is ridiculed very much for the following expression in his Treatise of Laws: "It is not to be permitted, that wealth of either gold or silver should get footing or settle in a city." Had he, say the critics, forbidden the possession of cattle, he might have called it the wealth of mutton and beef.

And now, what has been said on this subject, will, I presume, my dear TERENTIANUS, abundantly shew, of what service Figures may be in producing the Sublime. For it is manifest, that all I have mentioned render compositions more pathetic and affecting. For the Pathetic partakes as much of the Sublime, as writing exactly in rule and character can do of the Agreeable.

<sup>1</sup> Education of Cyrus.

<sup>2</sup> Commentators have laboured hard to discover what this disease was, and abundance of remarks, learned and curious to be sure, have been made upon it. The best way will be to imitate the decorum of Herodotus, and leave it still a mystery.



## PART IV

## SECTION XXX

BUT since the sentiments and the language of compositions are generally best explained by the light they throw upon one another, let us in the next place consider, what it is that remains to be said concerning the Diction. And here, that a judicious choice of proper and magnificent terms has wonderful effects in winning upon and entertaining an audience, cannot, I think, be denied. For it is from hence, that the greatest writers derive with indefatigable care the grandeur, the beauty, the solemnity, the weight, the strength, and the energy of their expressions. This clothes a composition in the most beautiful dress, makes it shine like a picture in all the gaiety of colour, and, in a word, it animates our thoughts, and inspires them with a kind of vocal life. But it is needless to dwell upon these particulars, before persons of so much taste and experience. Fine words are indeed the peculiar light in which our thoughts must shine. But then it is by no means proper that they should every where swell and look big. For dressing up a trifling subject in grand exalted expressions, makes the same ridiculous appearance, as the enormous mask of a tragedian would do upon the diminutive face of an infant. But in poetry \* \* \* \* \*

[The remainder of this Section is lost.] \* \* \* \* \*

## SECTION XXXI

\* \* \* \* \* [The beginning of this Section is lost.] \* \*

In this verse of Anacreon, the terms are vulgar, yet there is a simplicity in it which pleases, because it is natural :

Nor shall this Thracian vex me more !

And for this reason, that celebrated expression of Theopompus seems to me the most significant of any I ever met with, though Cecilius has found something to blame in it—"Philip (says he) was used to swallow affronts, in compliance with the exigencies of his affairs."

Vulgar terms are sometimes much more significant than

the most ornamental could possibly be. They are easily understood, because borrowed from common life; and what is most familiar to us, soonest engages our belief. Therefore, when a person, to promote his ambitious designs, bears ill treatment and reproaches, not only with patience, but a seeming pleasure, to say that *he swallows affronts*, is as happy and expressive a phrase as could possibly be invented. The following passage from Herodotus in my opinion comes very near it. "Cleomenes (says he) being seized with madness, with a little knife that he had, cut his flesh into small pieces, till, having entirely mangled his body, he expired." And again, "Pythes, remaining still in the ship, fought courageously, till he was hacked in pieces." These expressions approach near to vulgar, but are far from having vulgar significations.

## SECTION XXXII.

As to a proper number of Metaphors, Cecilius has gone into their opinion, who have settled it at two or three at most, in expressing the same object. But in this also, let Demosthenes be observed as our model and guide; and by him we shall find, that the proper time to apply them, is, when the passions are so much worked up, as to hurry on like a torrent, and unavoidably carry along with them a whole crowd of metaphors. "Those prostituted souls, those cringing traitors, those furies of the commonwealth, who have combined to wound and mangle their country, who have drunk up its liberty in healths, to Philip once, and since to Alexander, measuring their happiness by their belly and their lust. As for those generous principles of honour, and that maxim, *never to endure a master*, which to our brave forefathers were the high ambition of life, and the standard of felicity, these they have quite subverted." Here, by means of this multitude of Tropes, the orator bursts out upon the traitors in the warmest indignation. It is, however, the precept of Aristotle and Theophrastus, that bold Metaphors ought to be introduced with some small alleviations; such as, *if it may be so expressed*; and *as it were*, and *if I may speak with so much boldness*. For this excuse, say they, very much palliates the hardness of the figures.

Such a rule hath a general use, and therefore I admit it: yet still I maintain, what I advanced before in regard to Figures, that bold Metaphors, and those too in good plenty, are very seasonable in a noble composition, where they are always mitigated and softened, by the vehement Pathetic and generous Sublime dispersed through the whole. For as it is the nature of the Pathetic and Sublime, to run rapidly along, and carry all before them, so they require the figures, they are worked up in, to be strong and forcible, and do not so much as give leisure to a hearer, to cavil at their number, because they immediately strike his imagination, and inflame him with all the warmth and fire of the speaker.

But further, in Illustrations and Descriptions, there is nothing so expressive and significant, as a chain of continued Tropes. By these has Xenophon described, in so pompous and magnificent terms, the anatomy of the human body. By these has Plato<sup>1</sup> described the same thing, in so unparalleled, so Divine a manner. "The head of man *he calls* a citadel. The neck is an isthmus placed between the head and the breast. The vertebræ, or joints, on which it turns, are so many hinges. Pleasure is the bait, which allures men to evil, and the tongue is the informer of tastes. The heart, being the knot of the veins, and the fountain from whence the blood arises, and briskly circulates through all the members, is a watch-tower completely fortified. The pores *he calls* narrow streets. And because the heart is subject to violent palpitations, either when disturbed with fear of some impending evil, or when inflamed with wrath, the gods, *says he*, have provided against any ill effect that might hence arise, by giving a place in the body to the lungs, a soft and bloodless substance, furnished with inward vacuities, like a sponge, that whenever choler inflames the heart, the lungs should easily yield, should gradually break its violent strokes, and preserve it from harm. The seat of the concupiscible passions, *he has named* the apartment of the women; the seat of the irascible, the apartment of the men. The spleen is the sponge of the entrails, from whence, when filled with excrements, it is swelled and bloated. Afterwards

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<sup>1</sup> Plato in Timæus.

(proceeds he) the gods covered all those parts with flesh, their rampart and defence against the extremities of heat and cold, soft throughout like a cushion, and gently giving way to outward impressions. The blood *he calls* the pasture of the flesh; and *adds*, that for the sake of nourishing the remotest parts, they opened the body into a number of rivulets, like a garden well stocked with plenty of canals, that the veins might by this means receive their supply of the vital moisture from the heart, as the common source, and convey it through all the sluices of the body. And at the approach of death, the soul, *he says*, is loosed, like a ship from her cables, and left at the liberty of driving at pleasure." Many other turns of the same nature in the sequel might be adjoined, but these already abundantly shew, that the Tropes are naturally endued with an air of grandeur, that Metaphors contribute very much to Sublimity, and are of very important service in descriptive and pathetic compositions.

That the use of Tropes, as well as of all other things which are ornamental in discourse, may be carried to excess, is obvious enough, though I should not mention it. Hence it comes to pass, that many severely censure Plato, because oftentimes, as if he was mad to utter his words, he suffers himself to be hurried into raw undigested Metaphors, and a vain pomp of Allegory. "For is it not (says he in his *Laws*) easy to conceive, that a city ought to resemble a goblet replenished with a well-tempered mixture? where, when the foaming deity of wine is poured in, it sparkles and fumes; but when chastised by another more sober divinity, it joins in firm alliance, and composes a pleasant and palatable liquor." For (say they) to call water *a sober divinity*, and the mixture *chastisement*, is a shrewd argument, that the author was not very sober himself.

Cecilius had certainly these trifling flourishes in view, when he had the rashness, in his Essay on *Lysias*, to declare him much preferable to Plato; biassed to it by two passions equally

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<sup>1</sup> *Lysias* was one of the ten celebrated orators of Athens. He was a neat, elegant, correct, and witty writer, but not sublime. Cicero calls him *prope perfectum*, almost perfect. Quintilian says he was more like a clear fountain than a great river.



indiscreet. For though he loved Lysias as well as his own self, yet he hated Plato with more violence than he could possibly love Lysias. Besides, he was hurried on by so much heat and prejudice, as to presume on the concession of certain points which never will be granted. For Plato being oftentimes faulty, he thence takes occasion to cry up Lysias for a faultless and consummate writer; which is so far from being truth, that it has not so much as the shadow of it.

### SECTION XXXIII

BUT let us for once admit the possibility of a faultless and consummate writer; and then, will it not be worth while to consider at large that important question, Whether, in poetry or prose, what is truly grand in the midst of some faults, be not preferable to that which has nothing extraordinary in its best parts, correct however throughout, and faultless? And, further, whether the excellence of fine writing consists in the number of its beauties, or in the grandeur of its strokes? For these points, being peculiar to the Sublime, demand an illustration.

I readily allow, that writers of a lofty and towering genius are by no means pure and correct, since whatever is neat and accurate throughout, must be exceedingly liable to flatness. In the Sublime, as in great affluence of fortune, some minuter articles will unavoidably escape observation. But it is almost impossible for a low and grovelling genius to be guilty of error, since he never endangers himself by soaring on high, or aiming at eminence, but still goes on in the same uniform secure track, whilst its very height and grandeur exposes the Sublime to sudden falls. Nor am I ignorant indeed of another thing, which will no doubt be urged, that in passing our judgment upon the works of an author, we always muster his imperfections, so that the remembrance of his faults sticks indelibly fast in the mind, whereas that of his excellences is quickly worn out. For my part, I have taken notice of no inconsiderable number of faults in Homer, and some other of the greatest authors, and cannot by any means be blind or partial to them; however, I judge them not to be voluntary faults,



so much as accidental slips incurred through inadvertence; such as, when the mind is intent upon things of a higher nature, will creep insensibly into compositions. And for this reason I give it as my real opinion, that the great and noble flights, though they cannot every where boast an equality of perfection, yet ought to carry off the prize, by the sole merit of their own intrinsic grandeur.

<sup>1</sup>Apollonius, author of the *Argonautics*, was a writer without a blemish: and no one ever succeeded better in Pastoral than Theocritus, excepting some pieces where he has quitted his own province. But yet, would you choose to be Apollonius or Theocritus rather than Homer? Is the poet <sup>2</sup>Eratosthenes, whose *Erigone* is a complete and delicate performance, and not chargeable with one fault, to be esteemed a superior poet to Archilochus, who flies off into many and brave irregularities; a godlike spirit bearing him forwards in the noblest career, such spirit as will not bend to rule, or easily brook control? In Lyrics, would you sooner be <sup>3</sup>Bacchylides than Pindar, or <sup>4</sup>Io the Chian, than the great Sophocles? Bacchylides and Io have written smoothly, delicately, and correctly; they have left nothing without the nicest decoration; but in

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<sup>1</sup> Apollonius was born at Alexandria, but called a Rhodian, because he resided at Rhodes. He was the scholar of Callimachus, and succeeded Eratosthenes as keeper of Ptolemy's library: he wrote the *Argonautics*, which are still extant. Of this poet Quintilian has thus given his judgment: "He published a performance, which was not despicable, but had a certain even mediocrity throughout."

<sup>2</sup> Eratosthenes the Cyrenean, scholar of Callimachus the poet. Among other pieces of poetry, he wrote the *Erigone*. He was predecessor to Apollonius, in Ptolemy's library at Alexandria.

<sup>3</sup> Bacchylides, a Greek poet, famous for lyric verse; born at Iulis, a town in the Isle of Ceos. He wrote the *Apodemics*, or the travels of a deity. The Emperor Julian was so pleased with his verses, that he is said to have drawn from them rules for the conduct of life. And Hiero the Syracusan thought them preferable even to Pindar's, by a judgment quite contrary to what is given here by Longinus.

<sup>4</sup> Io the Chian, a dithyrambic poet, who, besides Odes, is said to have composed forty fables. He is called by Aristophanes, *The Eastern Star*, because he died whilst he was writing an Ode that began with those words.

Pindar and Sophocles, who carry fire along with them through the violence of their motion, that very fire is many times unseasonably quenched, and then they drop most unfortunately down. But yet no one, I am certain, who has the least discernment, will scruple to prefer the single *Œdipus* of Sophocles, before all that *Io* ever composed.

#### SECTION XXXIV

IF the beauties of writers are to be estimated by their number, and not by their quality or grandeur, then Hyperides will prove far superior to Demosthenes. He has more harmony and a finer cadence, he has a greater number of beauties, and those in a degree almost next to excellent. He resembles a champion, who, professing himself master of the five exercises, in each of them severally must yield the superiority to others, but in all together stands alone and unrivalled. For Hyperides has in every point, except the structure of his words, imitated all the virtues of Demosthenes, and has abundantly added the graces and beauties of Lysias. When his subject demands simplicity, his style is exquisitely smooth; nor does he utter every thing with one emphatical air of vehemence, like Demosthenes. His thoughts are always just and proper, tempered with most delicious sweetness and the softest harmony of words. His turns of wit are inexpressibly fine. He raises a laugh with the greatest art, and is prodigiously dexterous at irony or sneer. His strokes of raillery are far from ungenteel; by no means far-fetched, like those of the depraved imitators of Attic neatness, but apposite and proper. How skilful at evading an argument! With what humour does he ridicule, and with what dexterity does he sting in the midst of a smile! In a word, there are inimitable graces in all he says. Never did any one more artfully excite compassion; never was any more diffuse in narration; never any more dexterous at quitting and resuming his subject with such easy address, and such pliant activity. This plainly appears in his little poetical fables of *Latona*; and besides, he has composed a funeral oration with such pomp and ornament, as I believe never will, or can, be equalled.

Demosthenes, on the other side, has been unsuccessful in representing the humours and characters of men; he was a stranger to diffusive eloquence; awkward in his address; void of all pomp and show in his language; and, in a word, for the most part, deficient in all the qualities ascribed to Hyperides.<sup>1</sup> Where his subject compels him to be merry or facetious, he makes people laugh, but it is at himself. And the more he endeavours at raillery, the more distant is he from it. Had he ever attempted an oration for a Phryne<sup>2</sup> or an Athenogenes, he would in such attempts have only served as a foil to Hyperides.

Yet after all, in my opinion, the numerous beauties of Hyperides are far from having any inherent greatness. They shew the sedateness and sobriety of the author's genius, but have not force enough to enliven or to warm an audience. No one that reads him, is ever sensible of extraordinary emotion. Whereas Demosthenes, adding to a continued vein of grandeur and to magnificence of diction (the greatest qualifications requisite in an orator), such lively strokes of passion, such copiousness of words, such address, and such rapidity of speech; and, what is his masterpiece, such force and vehem-

<sup>1</sup> Hyperides, of whom mention has been made already, and whom the Author in this Section compares with Demosthenes, was one of the *ten* famous orators of Athens. He was Plato's scholar, and thought by some to have shared with Lycurgus in the public administration. His orations for Phryne and Athenogenes were very much esteemed, though his defence of the former owed its success to a very remarkable incident, mentioned by Plutarch.

<sup>2</sup> Phryne was the most famous courtesan of that age; her form so beautiful, that it was taken as a model for all the statues of Venus carved at that time throughout Greece: yet an intrigue between her and Hyperides grew so scandalous, that an accusation was preferred against her in the court of Athens. Hyperides defended her with all the art and rhetoric which experience and love could teach him, and his oration for her was as pretty and beautiful as his subject. But as what is spoken to the ears makes not so deep an impression as what is shewn to the eyes, Hyperides found his eloquence unavailing, and effectually to soften the judges, uncovered the lady's bosom. Its snowy whiteness was an argument in her favour not to be resisted, and therefore she was immediately acquitted.

ence, as the greatest writers besides durst never aspire to; being, I say, abundantly furnished with all these Divine (it would be sin to call them human) abilities, he excels all before him in the beauties which are really his own; and to atone for deficiencies in those he has not, overthrows all opponents with the irresistible force and the glittering blaze of his lightning. For it is much easier to behold, with steadfast and undazzled eyes, the flashing lightning, than those ardent strokes of the Pathetic, which come so thick one upon another in his orations.

### SECTION XXXV

THE parallel between Plato and his opponent must be drawn in a different light. For Lysias falls short of him not only in excellence, but in number of his beauties. And what is more, he not only falls short of him in the number of his beauties, but exceeds him vastly in the number of his faults.

What then can we suppose that those god-like writers had in view, who laboured so much in raising their compositions to the highest pitch of the Sublime, and looked down with contempt upon accuracy and correctness?—Amongst others, let this reason be accepted. Nature never designed man to be a grovelling and ungenerous animal, but brought him into life, and placed him in the world, as in a crowded theatre, not to be an idle spectator, but spurred on by an eager thirst of excelling, ardently to contend in the pursuit of glory. For this purpose, she implanted in his soul an invincible love of grandeur, and a constant emulation of whatever seems to approach nearer to divinity than himself. Hence it is, that the whole universe is not sufficient for the extensive reach and piercing speculation of the human understanding. It passes the bounds of the material world, and launches forth at pleasure into endless space. Let any one take an exact survey of a life, which, in its every scene, is conspicuous on account of excellence, grandeur, and beauty, and he will soon discern for what noble ends we were born. Thus the impulse of nature inclines us to admire, not a little clear transparent rivulet that ministers to our necessities, but the Nile, the Ister, the Rhine, or still much more, the Ocean. We are



never surprised at the sight of a small fire that burns clear, and blazes out on our own private hearth, but view with amaze the celestial fires, though thy are often obscured by vapours and eclipses. Nor do we reckon any thing in nature more wonderful than the boiling furnaces of *Ætna*, which cast up stones, and sometimes whole rocks, from their labouring abyss, and pour out whole rivers of liquid and unmingled flame. And from hence we may infer, that whatever is useful and necessary to man, lies level to his abilities, and is easily acquired; but whatever exceeds the common size, is always great, and always amazing.

## SECTION XXXVI

WITH regard, therefore, to those sublime writers, whose flight, however exalted, never fails of its use and advantage, we must add another consideration.—Those other inferior beauties shew their authors to be men; but the Sublime makes near approaches to the height of God. What is correct and faultless, comes off barely without censure; but the grand and the lofty command admiration. What can I add further? One exalted and sublime sentiment in those noble authors makes ample amends for all their defects. And, what is most remarkable, were the errors of Homer, Demosthenes, Plato, and the rest of the most celebrated authors, to be culled carefully out and thrown together, they would not bear the least proportion to those infinite, those inimitable excellences, which are so conspicuous in these heroes of antiquity. And for this reason, has every age and every generation, unmoved by partiality, and unbiassed by envy, awarded the laurels to these great masters, which flourish still green and unfading on their brows, and will flourish,

As long as streams in silver mazes rove,  
Or Spring with annual green renews the grove.—FENTON.

A certain writer objects here, that an ill-wrought <sup>1</sup>Colossus

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<sup>1</sup>The Colossus was a most famous statue of Apollo, erected at Rhodes by Jalytus, of a size so vast, that the sea ran, and ships of the greatest burden sailed, between its legs.



cannot be set upon the level with a little faultless statue; for instance, <sup>1</sup>the little soldier of Polycletus: but the answer to this is very obvious. In the works of art we have regard to exact proportion; in those of nature, to grandeur and magnificence. Now speech is a gift bestowed upon us by nature. As, therefore, resemblance and proportion to the originals is required in statues, so, in the noble faculty of discourse, there should be something extraordinary, something more than humanly great.

But to close this long digression, which had been more regularly placed at the beginning of the Treatise; since it must be owned, that it is the business of art to avoid defect and blemish, and almost an impossibility in the Sublime, always to preserve the same majestic air, the same exalted tone, art and nature should join hands, and mutually assist one another. For, from such union and alliance, perfection must certainly result.

These are the decisions I have thought proper to make concerning the questions in debate. I pretend not to say they are absolutely right; let those who are willing, make use of their own judgment.

## SECTION XXXVII

To return. <sup>2</sup>Similes and Comparisons bear so near an affinity to Metaphors, as to differ from them only in one particular \* \* \* \* [The remainder of this Section is lost.] \* \* \* \*

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<sup>1</sup> The Doryphorus, a small statue by Polycletus, a celebrated statuary. The proportions were so finely observed in it, that Lysippus professed he had learned all his art from the study and imitation of it.

<sup>2</sup> The manner in which Similes or Comparisons differ from Metaphors, we cannot know from Longinus, because of the gap which follows in the original; but they differ only in the expression. To say that fine eyes are the eyes of a dove, or that cheeks are a bed of spices, are strong Metaphors; which become Comparisons, if expressed thus—are as the eyes of a dove, or as a bed of spices. [A Simile is an *expressed* likeness; a Metaphor an *assumed* one.—M. M.]

## SECTION XXXVIII

\* \* \* \* [The beginning of this Section on Hyperboles is lost.] \* \* \* \* \* As this Hyperbole, for instance, is exceeding bad: "If you carry not your brains in the soles of your feet, and tread upon them."<sup>1</sup> One consideration, therefore, must always be attended to, "How far the thought can properly be carried." For overshooting the mark often spoils an Hyperbole; and whatever is overstretched loses its tone, and immediately relaxes; nay, sometimes produces an effect contrary to that for which it was intended. Thus Isocrates, childishly ambitious of saying nothing without enlargement, has fallen into a shameful puerility. The end and design of his Panegyric<sup>2</sup> is to prove that the Athenians had done greater service to the united body of Greece than the Lacedemonians; and this is his beginning: "The virtue and efficacy of eloquence is so great, as to be able to render great things contemptible, to dress up trifling subjects in pomp and show, to clothe what is old and obsolete in a new dress, and put off new occurrences in an air of antiquity." And will it not be immediately demanded,—Is this what you are going to practise with regard to the affairs of the Athenians and Lacedemonians?—For this ill-timed encomium of eloquence is an inadvertent admonition to the audience, not to listen or give credit to what he says.

Those Hyperboles in short are the best (as I have before observed of Figures) which have neither the appearance nor air of Hyperboles. And this never fails to be the state of those, which in the heat of a passion flow out in the midst of some grand circumstance. Thus Thucydides has dexterously applied one to his countrymen that perished in Sicily: "The Syracusans (says he) came down upon them, and made a slaughter chiefly of those who were in the river. The water was immediately discoloured with blood. But the stream polluted with mud and gore, deterred them not from drinking

<sup>1</sup> Demosthenes.

<sup>2</sup> This is the most celebrated oration of Isocrates, which, after ten, or, as some say, fifteen years' labour spent upon it, begins in so indiscreet a manner.

it greedily, nor many of them from fighting desperately for a draught of it." A circumstance so uncommon and affecting, gives those expressions of drinking mud and gore, and fighting desperately for it, an air of probability.

Herodotus has used a like Hyperbole, concerning those warriors who fell at Thermopylæ: "In this place they defended themselves with the weapons that were left, and with their hands and teeth, till they were buried under the arrows of barbarians." Is it possible, you will say, for men to defend themselves with their teeth, against the fury and violence of armed assailants? Is it possible that men could be buried under arrows? Notwithstanding all this, there is a seeming probability in it. For the circumstance does not appear to have been fitted to the Hyperbole; but the Hyperbole seems to be the necessary production of the circumstance. For applying these strong Figures, only where the heat of action, or impetuosity of passion demands them (a point I shall never cease to insist upon), very much softens and mitigates the boldness of too daring expressions. So in comedy, circumstances wholly absurd and incredible pass off very well, because they answer their end, and raise a laugh. As in this passage: "He was owner of a piece of ground not so large as <sup>1</sup>a Lacedemonian letter." For laughter is a passion arising from some inward pleasure.

But Hyperboles equally serve to two purposes; they enlarge and they lessen. Stretching any thing beyond its natural size is the property of both. And the Diasym (the other

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<sup>1</sup> Demetrius Phalereus has commended one of these letters for its sententious and expressive conciseness, which has been often quoted to illustrate this passage. It is very well worth observation. The direction is longer than the letter:—

"The Lacedemonians to Philip.  
Dionysius is at Corinth."

At the time when this was written, Dionysius, who for his tyranny had been driven out of Sicily, taught school at Corinth for bread. So that it was a hint to Philip not to proceed, as he had begun, to imitate his conduct, lest he should be reduced to the same necessitous condition.

species of the Hyperbole) increases the lowness of any thing, or renders trifles more trifling.

## PART V

### SECTION XXXIX

WE have now, my friend, brought down our inquiries to the fifth and last source of Sublimity, which, according to the divisions premised at first, is the Composition or Structure of the words. And though I have drawn up, in two former treatises, whatever observations I had made on this head, yet the present occasion lays me under a necessity of making some additions *here*.

Harmonious Composition has not only a natural tendency to please and to persuade, but inspires us, to a wonderful degree, with generous ardour and passion. <sup>1</sup>Fine notes in music have a surprising effect on the passions of an audience. Do they not fill the breast with inspired warmth, and lift up the heart into heavenly transport? The very limbs receive motion from the notes, and the hearer, though he has no skill at all in music, is sensible, however, that all its turns make a strong impression on his body and mind. The sounds of any musical instrument are in themselves insignificant, yet, by the changes of the air, the agreement of the chords, and symphony of the parts, they give extraordinary pleasure, as we daily experience, to the minds of an audience. Yet these are only spurious images and faint imitations of the persuasive voice of man, and far from the genuine effects and operations of human nature.

What an opinion therefore may we justly form of fine Composition, the effect of that harmony, which nature has implanted in the voice of man! It is made up of words, which by no means die upon the ear, but sink within, and

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<sup>1</sup> In this passage two musical instruments are mentioned, *aulos* and *cithara*; but as what is said of them in the Greek will not suit with the modern notions of a pipe and a harp, I hope I shall not be blamed for dropping those words, and keeping these remarks in a general application to music.

reach the understanding. And then, does it not inspire us with fine ideas of sentiments and things, of beauty and of order, qualities of the same date and existence with our souls? Does it not, by an elegant structure and marshalling of sounds, convey the passions of the speaker into the breasts of his audience? Then, does it not seize their attention, and, by framing an edifice of words to suit the sublimity of thoughts, delight, and transport, and raise those ideas of dignity and grandeur, which it shares itself, and was designed, by the ascendant it gains upon the mind, to excite in others? But it is folly to endeavour to prove what all the world will allow to be true. For experience is an indisputable conviction.

That sentiment seems very lofty, and justly deserves admiration, which Demosthenes immediately subjoins to the decree. "This very decree scattered, like a vapour, [*hōspernephos*] the danger which at that time hung hovering over the city."<sup>1</sup> Yet the sentiment itself is not more to be admired than the harmony of the period. It consists throughout of Dactyls, the finest measure, and most conducing to Sublimity. And hence are they admitted into heroic verse, universally allowed to be the most noble of all. But for further satisfaction, only transpose a word or two, just as you please; or take away a syllable, and you will quickly discern how much Harmony conspires with Sublimity. In *hōsper nephos* the first word moves along in a stately measure of four times, and when one syllable is taken away, as *hōs nephos*, the subtraction maims the Sublimity. So, on the other side, if you lengthen it, *hōsperci nephos*, the sense indeed is still preserved, but the cadence is entirely lost. For the grandeur of the period languisheth and relaxeth, when enfeebled by the stress that must be laid upon the additional syllable.

## SECTION XL

BUT, amongst other methods, an apt Connexion of the parts conduces as much to the aggrandizing discourse, as symmetry in the members of the body to a majestic mien. If they are taken apart, each single member will have no beauty or

<sup>1</sup> Oration on the Crown.



grandeur, but when skilfully knit together, they produce what is called a *fine person*. So the constituent parts of noble periods, when rent asunder and divided, in the act of division fly off and lose their Sublimity; but when united into one body, and associated together by the bond of harmony, they join to promote their own elevation, and by their union and multiplicity bestow a more emphatical turn upon every period. Thus several poets, and other writers, possessed of no natural Sublimity, or rather entire strangers to it, have very frequently made use of common and vulgar terms, that have not the least air of elegance to recommend them; yet, by musically disposing and artfully connecting such terms, they clothe their periods in a kind of pomp and exaltation, and dexterously conceal their intrinsic lowness.

Many writers have succeeded by this method, but especially <sup>1</sup>Philistus, as also Aristophanes, in some passages, and Euripides in very many. Thus Hercules, after the murder of his children, cries,<sup>2</sup>

I'm full of mis'ries; there's not room for more.

The words are very vulgar, but their turn answering so exactly to the sense, gives the period an exalted air. And if you transpose them into any other order, you will quickly be convinced, that Euripides excels more in fine composition than in fine sentiments. So in his description of <sup>3</sup>Dirce dragged along by the bull,—

Whene'er the madd'ning creature rag'd about  
And whirl'd his bulk around in awkward circles,  
The dame, the oak, the rock, were dragg'd along.

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<sup>1</sup> Commentators differ about this Philistus. Some affirm it should be Philiscus, who, according to Dacier, wrote comedy, but according to Tollius, tragedy. Quintilian (whom Dr. Pearce follows) mentions Philistus a Syracusan, a great favourite of Dionysius the tyrant, whose history he wrote, after the manner of Thucydides, but with the sincerity of a courtier.

<sup>2</sup> Euripid. Hercules furens.

<sup>3</sup> Zethus and Amphion tied their mother-in-law, Dirce, by the hair of her head to a wild bull, which image Euripides has represented in this passage. Langbaine observes, that there is a fine sculpture on this subject, by Taurisius, in the palace of Farnese at Rome.

The thought itself is noble, but is more ennobled, because the terms used in it are harmonious, and neither run too hastily off the ear, nor are, as it were, mechanically accelerated. They are disposed into due pauses, mutually supporting one another; these pauses are all of a slow and stately measure, sedately mounting to solid and substantial grandeur.

## SECTION XLI

NOTHING so much debases Sublimity as broken and precipitate measures, such as <sup>1</sup>Pyrrhics, Trochees, and Dichorees, that are fit for nothing but dances. Periods tuned in these numbers, are indeed neat and brisk, but devoid of passion; and their cadence being eternally the same, becomes very disagreeable. But what is still worse, as in songs, the notes divert the mind from the sense, and make us attentive only to the music; so these brisk and rhyming periods never raise in the audience any passion suitable to the subject, but only an attention to the run of the words. Hence, foreseeing the places where they must necessarily rest, they have gestures answering to every turn, can even beat the time and tell beforehand, as exactly as in a dance, where the pause will be.

In like manner, Periods forced into too narrow compass, and pent up in words of short and few syllables, or that are, as it were, nailed together in an awkward and clumsy manner, are always destitute of grandeur.

## SECTION XLII

CONTRACTION of Style is another great diminution of Sublimity. Grandeur requires room, and when under too much confinement, cannot move so freely as it ought. I do not mean here Periods, that demand a proper conciseness; but, on the contrary, those that are curtailed and minced. Too much Contraction lays a restraint upon the sense, but Conciseness strengthens and adjusts it. And on the other side, it is evident, that when periods are spun out into a vast extent, their

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<sup>1</sup> A Pyrrhic is a foot of two short syllables; a Trochee of one long and one short; and a Dichoree is a double Trochee.

life and spirit evaporate, and all their strength is lost, by being quite overstretched.

## SECTION XLIII

Low and sordid words are terrible blemishes to fine sentiments. Those of Herodotus, in his description of a tempest, are divinely noble, but the terms in which they are expressed, very much tarnish and impair their lustre. Thus, when he says, "The seas began to seeth," how does the uncouth sound of the word *seeth*, lessen the grandeur? And further, "The wind (says he) was tired out, and those who were wrecked in the storm, ended their lives very disagreeably." To be *tired out*, is a mean and vulgar term; and that *disagreeably*, a word highly disproportioned to the tragical event it is used to express.

<sup>1</sup>Theopompus, in like manner, after setting out splendidly in describing the Persian expedition into Egypt, has spoiled all, by the intermixture of some low and trivial words. "What city or what nation was there in all Asia, which did not compliment the king with an embassy? What rarity was there, either of the produce of the earth, or the work of art, with which he was not presented? How many rich and gorgeous carpets, with vestments purple, white, and particoloured? How many tents of golden texture, suitably furnished with all necessities? How many embroidered robes and sumptuous beds, besides an immense quantity of wrought silver and gold, cups and goblets, some of which you might see adorned with precious stones, and others embellished with most exquisite art and costly workmanship? Add to these innumerable sorts of arms, Grecian and Barbarian, beasts of burden beyond computation, and cattle fit to form the most luxurious repasts. And further, how many bushels of pickles and preserved fruits? How many hampers, packs of paper, and books, and all things besides, that necessity or convenience could require? In a

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<sup>1</sup> Theopompus was a Chian and a scholar of Isocrates. His genius was too hot and impetuous, which was the occasion of a remark of his master Isocrates, that "Ephorus always wanted a spur, but Theopompus a curb."

word, there was so great abundance of all sorts of flesh ready salted, that when put together, they swelled to prodigious heights, and were regarded by persons at a distance, as so many mountains or hillocks piled one upon another." He has here sunk from a proper elevation of his sense to a shameful lowness, at that very instant, when his subject required an enlargement. And besides, by his confused mixture of baskets, of pickles, and of packs, in the narrative of so grand preparations, he has shifted the scene, and presented us with a kitchen. If, upon making preparation for any grand expedition, any one should bring and throw down a parcel of hampers and packs, in the midst of massy goblets adorned with inestimable stones, or of silver embossed, and tents of golden stuffs, what an unseemly spectacle would such a gallimaufry present to the eye! It is the same with description, in which these low terms, unseasonably applied, become so many blemishes and flaws.

Now he might have satisfied himself with giving only a summary account of those mountains (as he says they were thought) of provisions, and when he came to other particulars of the preparations, might have varied his narration thus; "There was a great multitude of camels and other beasts, laden with all sorts of meat requisite either for satiety or delicacy;" or have termed them, "heaps of all sorts of viands, that would serve as well to form an exquisite repast, as to gratify the nicest palate;" or rather, to comply with his humour of relating things exactly, "all that caterers and cooks could prepare, as nice and delicate."

In the Sublime, we ought never to take up with sordid and blemished terms, unless reduced to it by the most urgent necessity. The dignity of our words ought always to be proportioned to the dignity of our sentiments.

Here we should imitate the proceeding of nature in the human fabric, who has neither placed those parts, which it is indecent to mention, nor the vents of the excrements, in open view, but concealed them as much as is possible, and "removed their channels (to make use of Xenophon's words) to the greatest distance from the eyes," thereby to preserve the beauty of the animal entire and unblemished.

To pursue this topic further, by a particular recital of



whatever diminishes and impairs the Sublime, would be a needless task. We have already shewn what methods elevate and ennoble, and it is obvious to every one that their opposites must lower and debase it.

## SECTION XLIV

SOMETHING yet remains to be said, upon which, because it suits well with your inquisitive disposition, I shall not be averse from enlarging. It is not long since a philosopher of my acquaintance discoursed me in the following manner.

"It is (said he) to me, as well as to many others, a just matter of surprise, how it comes to pass, that in the age we live, there are many geniuses well practised in the arts of eloquence and persuasion, that can discourse with dexterity and strength, and embellish their style in a very graceful manner, but none (or so few, that they are next to none) who may be said to be truly great and sublime. The scarcity of such writers is general throughout the world. May we believe at last, that there is solidity in that trite observation, That democracy is the nurse of true genius; that fine writers will be found only in this sort of government, with which they flourish and triumph, or decline and die? Liberty, it is said, produces fine sentiments in men of genius; it invigorates their hopes, excites an honourable emulation, and inspires an ambition and thirst of excelling. And what is more, in free states there are prizes to be gained, which are worth disputing. So that by this means, the natural faculties of the orators are sharpened and polished by continual practice, and the liberty of their thoughts, as it is reasonable to expect, shines conspicuously out in the liberty of their debates.

"But for our parts (pursued he) we were born in subjection, in lawful subjection, it is true, to arbitrary government. Hence, the prevailing manners made too strong an impression on our infant minds, and the infection was sucked in with the milk of our nurses. We have never tasted liberty, that copious and fertile source of all that is beautiful and of all that is great, and hence are we nothing but pompous flatterers. It is from hence that we may see all other qualifi-



cations displayed to perfection, in the minds of slaves: but never yet did a slave become an orator. His spirit being effectually broken, the timorous vassal will still be uppermost; the habit of subjection continually overawes and beats down his genius. For, according to Homer,<sup>1</sup>

Jove fix'd it certain, that whatever day  
Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.—*Pope.*

“Thus I have heard (if what I have heard in this case may deserve credit) that the cases in which dwarfs are kept, not only prevent the future growth of those who are inclosed in them, but diminish what bulk they already have, by too close constriction of their parts. So slavery, be it never so easy, yet is slavery still, and may deservedly be called the prison of the soul, and the public dungeon.”

Here I interrupted. “Such complaints as yours, against the present times, are generally heard, and easily made. But are you sure that this corruption of genius is not owing to the profound peace which reigns throughout the world? or rather, does it not flow from the war within us, and the sad effects of our own turbulent passions? Those passions plunge us into the worst of slaveries, and tyrannically drag us wherever they please. Avarice (that disease of which the whole world is sick beyond a cure), aided by voluptuousness, holds us fast in chains of thralldom; or rather, if I may so express it, overwhelms life itself, as well as all that live, in the depths of misery. For love of money is the disease which renders us most abject; and love of pleasure is that which renders us most corrupt. I have, indeed, thought much upon it, but after all judge it impossible for the pursuers, or, to speak more truly, the adorers and worshippers of immense riches, to preserve their souls from the infection of those vices which are firmly allied to them. For profuseness will be wherever there is affluence. They are firmly linked together, and constant attendants upon one another. Wealth unbars the gates of cities, and opens the doors of houses: profuseness gets in at the same time, and there they jointly fix their residence. After some continuance in their new establishment,

<sup>1</sup> *Odyssey.*

they build their nests (in the language of philosophy), and propagate their species. There they hatch arrogance, pride, and luxury, no spurious brood, but their genuine offspring. If these children of wealth be fostered and suffered to reach maturity, they quickly engender the most inexorable tyrants, and make the soul groan under the oppressions of insolence, injustice, and the most seared and hardened impudence. When men are thus fallen, what I have mentioned must needs result from their depravity. They can no longer endure a sight of any thing above their grovelling selves; and as for reputation, they regard it not. When once such corruption infects an age, it gradually spreads and becomes universal. The faculties of the soul will then grow stupid, their spirit will be lost, and good sense and genius must lie in ruins, when the care and study of man is engaged about the mortal, the worthless part of himself, and he has ceased to cultivate virtue, and polish his nobler part, the soul.

"A corrupt and dishonest judge is incapable of making unbiassed and solid decisions by the rules of equity and honour. His habit of corruption unavoidably prevents what is right and just, from appearing right and just to him. Since then the whole tenor of life is guided only by the rule of interest, to promote which, we even desire the death of others to enjoy their fortunes, after having by base and disingenuous practices crept into their wills; and since we frequently hazard our lives for a little pelf, the miserable slaves of our own avarice, can we expect, in such general corruption, so contagious a depravity, to find one generous and impartial soul above the sordid views of avarice, and clear of every selfish passion, that may distinguish what is truly great, what works are fit to live for ever? Is it not better for persons in our situation, to submit to the yoke of government, rather than continue masters of themselves, since such headstrong passions, when set at liberty, would rage like madmen, who have burst their prisons, and inflame the whole world with endless disorders? In a word, an insensibility to whatever is truly great has been the bane of every rising genius of the present age. Hence life in general (for the exceptions are exceeding few) is thrown away in indolence and sloth. In this deadly

lethargy, or even any brighter intervals of the disease, our faint endeavours aim at nothing but pleasure and empty ostentation, too weak and languid for those high acquisitions, which take their rise from noble emulation, and end in real advantage and substantial glory."

Here perhaps it may be proper to drop this subject, and pursue our business. <sup>1</sup>We come now to the Passions, an account of which I have promised before in a distinct treatise, since they not only constitute the ornaments and beauties of discourse, but (if I am not mistaken) have a great share in the *SUBLIME*.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "We come now to the Passions," &c. The learned world ought certainly to be condoled with, on the great loss they have sustained in Longinus's Treatise on the Passions.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Pearce's advice will be a seasonable conclusion—"Read over very frequently this golden Treatise (which deserves not only to be read but imitated), that you may hence understand, not only how the best authors have written, but learn yourself to become an author of the first rank."



























